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THE

COMPLETE WORKS

OF

ROBERT BURNS

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The New Brig of Ayr.

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THE

COMPLETE WORKS

OF

ROBERT BURNS

(SELF-INTERPRETING)

ILLUSTRATED WITH SIXTY ETCHINGS
AND WOOD CUTS, MAPS AND FACSIMILES

VOLUME II

PHILADELPHIA
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PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND OR EDINBURGH EDITION.

DEDICATION

TO THE

NOBLEMEN AND GENTLEMEN

OF THE

CALEDONIAN HUNT.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN:—

A Scottish Bard, proud of the name, and whose highest ambition is to sing in his country's service, where shall he so properly look for patronage as to the illustrious names of his native land; those who bear the honors and inherit the virtues of their ancestors? The Poetic Genius of my country found me, as the prophetic bard Elijah did Elisha—at the plough, and threw her inspiring mantle over me. She bade me sing the loves, the joys, the rural scenes and rural pleasures of my native soil, in my native tongue; I tuned my wild, artless notes as she inspired. She whispered me to come to this ancient Metropolis of Caledonia, and lay my songs under your honored protection; I now obey her dictates.

Though much indebted to your goodness, I do not approach you, my Lords and Gentlemen, in the usual style of dedication, to thank you for past favors: that path is so hackneyed by prostituted learning that honest rusticity is ashamed of it. Nor do I present this Address with the venal soul of a servile author, looking for a continuation of those favors: I was bred to the plough and am independent. I come to claim the common Scottish name with you, my illustrious countrymen; and to tell the world that I glory in the title. I come to congratulate my country that the blood of her ancient heroes still runs uncontaminated, and that from your courage, knowledge, and public spirit, she may expect protection, wealth and liberty. In the last place, I come to proffer my warmest wishes to the great fountain of honor, the Monarch of the universe, for your welfare and happiness.

When you go forth to waken the echoes, in the ancient and favorite amusement of your forefathers, may Pleasure ever be of your party: and may social Joy await your return! When harassed in courts or camps with the jostlings of bad men and bad measures, may the honest consciousness of injured worth attend your return to your native seats; and may domestic happiness, with a smiling welcome, meet you at your gates! May corruption shrink at your kindling indignant glance; and may tyranny in the ruler, and licentiousness in the people, equally find you an inexorable foe!

I have the honor to be,
With the sincerest gratitude and highest respect,

My Lords and Gentlemen,
You most devoted humble Servant,

EDINBURGH,
April 4, 1787.

ROBERT BURNS.

POEMS AND SONGS.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

The contents of the preceding volume brought the reader down to about the end of July 1786, when the poet was awaiting the appearance of the Kilmarnock Edition of his poems. Only one poetical piece in this second volume "The Farewell" commemorates that period of gloom. Dawn was nearer than he thought. Jean Armour's safe delivery of twin-children, on 3d September of that year, and the happy domestic arrangement that followed, helped to make matters flow more smoothly with the forlorn poet. On the following day, a poet of a different stamp, the venerable Dr. Blacklock of Edinburgh, who was regarded as the centre of a literary circle in that city, wrote to his friend, the Rev. Dr. Lawrie, parish minister of Loudon, a letter which is supposed to have had considerable effect on the after career of Burns. Its subject was the wonderful volume of poetry that had issued from the Kilmarnock Press about five weeks previously, and which Dr. Lawrie had transmitted to Edinburgh to excite the blind bard's astonishment, and elicit his opinion of its contents. That letter concluded with an expression of the writer's regret that although another copy of Burns's poems had been "sought with diligence and ardor," it could not be procured because the whole impression was exhausted. "It were therefore," he added, "much to be wished, for the sake of the young man, that a second edition more numerous than the former could immediately be printed."

To this encouragement the publication of the Edinburgh Edition—chiefly—was due. J. H.

NATURE'S LAW—A POEM.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

(ALDINE ED., 1839.)

"Great Nature spoke; observant man obey'd."—POPE.

LET other heroes boast their scars,
  The marks of *sturt* and strife; turmoil
And other poets sing of wars,
  The plagues of human life;
Shame *fa'* the fun; wi' sword and gun befall
  To *slap* mankind like lumber! cut down
I sing his name, and nobler fame,
  Wha multiplies our number.

Great Nature spoke, with air benign,
"Go on, ye human race;
This lower world I you resign;
  Be fruitful and increase.
The liquid fire of strong desire
  I've pour'd it in each bosom;
Here, on this hand, does Mankind stand,
  And there, is Beauty's blossom."

The Hero of these artless strains,
  A lowly bard was he,
Who sung his rhymes in Coila's plains,
  With *meikle* mirth an' glee; much
Kind Nature's care had given his share
  Large, of the flaming current;
And, all devout, he never sought
  To stem the sacred torrent.

He felt the powerful, high behest
  Thrill, vital, thro' and thro';
And sought a correspondent breast,
  To give obedience due:
Propitious Powers screen'd the young flow'rs,
  From mildews of abortion;
And lo! the bard—a great reward—
  Has got a double portion! *

Auld *cantie* Coil may count the day, frisky
  As annual it returns,
The third of Libra's equal sway,
  That gave another B[urn]s,
With future rhymes, an' other times,
  To emulate his sire;
To sing auld Coil in nobler style,
  With more poetic fire.

Ye Powers of peace, and peaceful song,
  Look down with gracious eyes;
And bless auld Coila, large and long,
  With multiplying joys;
Lang may she stand to prop the land,
  The flow'r of ancient nations;
And B[urns]es spring, her fame to sing,
  To endless generations!

[This characteristic effusion celebrates a ruling quality in the soul of Burns, and reminds us of the epigram he afterwards inscribed on a window-pane of the Globe Tavern, Dumfries:—

"I'm better pleased to make one more,
Than be the death of twenty."

The reference, in the last stanza but one, is to Robert Burns, junior, who was born on 3d September 1786.]

* Jean Armour begot the bard twins Sep. 3d 1786.—J. H.

THE BRIGS OF AYR:

A POEM.

Inscribed to JOHN BALLANTINE, Esq., Ayr.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

THE simple Bard, rough at the rustic plough,
Learning his tuneful trade from ev'ry bough;
The chanting linnet, or the mellow thrush,
Hailing the setting sun, sweet, in the green thorn bush;
The soaring lark, the perching red-breast shrill,
Or deep-ton'd plovers grey, wild-whistling o'er the hill;
Shall he—nurst in the peasant's lowly shed,
To hardy independence bravely bred,
By early poverty to hardship steel'd,
And train'd to arms in stern Misfortune's field—
Shall he be guilty of their hireling crimes,
The servile, mercenary Swiss of rhymes?

Or labor hard the panegyric close,
With all the venal soul of dedicating prose?
No! though his artless strains he rudely sings,
And throws his hand uncouthly o'er the strings,
He glows with all the spirit of the Bard,
Fame, honest fame, his great, his dear reward.
Still, if some patron's gen'rous care he trace,
Skill'd in the secret to bestow with grace;
When Ballantine befriends his humble name,
And hands the rustic stranger up to fame,
With heartfelt throes his grateful bosom swells,
The godlike bliss, to give, alone excels.

'Twas when the stacks get on their winter *hap*, covering
And *thack and rape* secure the toil-won thatch and rope
crap; crop
Potato *bings* are snuggèd up frae *skaith* heaps danger
O' coming Winter's biting, frosty breath;
The bees, rejoicing o'er their summer toils,
Unnumber'd buds an' flow'rs' delicious spoils,
Seal'd up with frugal care in massive waxen piles,
Are doom'd by Man, that tyrant o'er the weak,
The death o' devils, *smoor'd* wi' brimstone smothered
reek: smoke
The thundering guns are heard on ev'ry side,
The wounded coveys, reeling, scatter wide;
The feather'd field-mates, bound by Nature's tie,
Sires, mothers, children, in one carnage lie:
(What warm, poetic heart but inly bleeds,
And execrates man's savage, ruthless deeds!)
Nae mair the flow'r in field or meadow springs;
Nae mair the grove with airy concert rings,
Except perhaps the Robin's whistling glee,
Proud o' the height o' some bit *half-lang* tree: half-grown
The hoary morns precede the sunny days,

Mild, calm, serene, wide spreads the noontide blaze,
While thick the gossamer waves wanton in the rays.

'Twas in that season, when a simple Bard,
Unknown and poor—simplicity's reward!—
Ae night, within the ancient brugh of Ayr,
By whim inspir'd, or haply prest wi' care,
He left his bed, and took his wayward route,
And down by Simpson's * wheel'd the left about:
(Whether impell'd by all-directing Fate,
To witness what I after shall narrate;
Or whether, rapt in meditation high,
He wander'd out, he knew not where nor why:)
The drowsy Dungeon-clock † had number'd two,
And Wallace Tower † had sworn the fact was true:
The tide-swoln firth, with sullen-sounding roar,
Through the still night dash'd hoarse along the shore:
All else was hush'd as Nature's closèd e'e;
The silent moon shone high o'er tower and tree;
The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
Crept, gently-crusting, o'er the glittering stream—

When, lo! on either hand the list'ning Bard,
The *clanging sugh* of whistling wings is heard; rushing sound
Two dusky forms dart thro' the midnight air,
Swift as the gos ‡ drives on the wheeling hare;
Ane on th' Auld Brig his airy shape uprears,
The ither flutters o'er the rising piers:
Our warlock Rhymer instantly descried
The Sprites that owre the Brigs of Ayr preside.
(That Bards are second-sighted is nae joke,
And ken the lingo of the sp'ritual folk;

---

* A noted tavern at the Auld Brig end.—*R. B.*

† The two steeples.—*R. B.* The first was connected with the Old Jail, now removed, and the other was an antique erection in the High Street, now replaced by an elegant tower so named.

‡ The Gos-hawk, or Falcon.—*R. B.*

Fays, *Spunkies*, *Kelpies*,* a', they can explain them,
And ev'n the *vera deils* they *brawly ken* them). very d—s / well know
'Auld Brig' appear'd of ancient Pictish race,
The vera wrinkles Gothic in his face;
He seem'd as he wi' Time had *warstl'd* lang, wrestled
Yet, teughly doure, he bade an unco bang. †
'New Brig' was *buskit* in a *braw* new coat, dressed fine
That he, at Lon'on, *frae ane* Adams ‡ got; from one
In 's hand five taper staves as smooth 's a bead,
Wi' virls an' whirlygigums at the head. §
The Goth was stalking round with anxious search,
Spying the time-worn flaws in ev'ry arch;
It chanc'd his new-come neibor took his e'e,
And e'en a vex'd and angry heart had he!
Wi' *thieveless* sneer to see his modish mien, unconcealed
He, down the water, *gies* him this gives
guid-een:— good-evening

AULD BRIG.

I doubt na, frien', ye'll think ye're *nae* no
sheepshank, small potatoes
Ance ye were *streekit owre* frae bank to bank! stretched across
But *gin ye be* a brig as auld as me— by the time
Tho' faith, that date, I doubt, ye'll never see—
There'll be, if that day come, I'll *wad* a *boddle*, wager penny
Some fewer *whigmaleeries* in your *noddle*. vain conceits brain

NEW BRIG.

Auld Vandal! ye but show your little *mense*, civility
Just much *about it* wi' your scanty sense: on par
Will your poor, narrow, foot-path of a street,
Where twa wheel-barrows tremble when they meet,

---

* Varieties of sprites. The fays are fairies; spunkies, *ignes fatui* or Will o' the Wisps; Kelpies, Water-spirits.—J. H.

† Toughly stubborn he withstood Time's heavy stroke.—J. H.

‡ Robert Adams, Esq., an eminent Scottish architect, resident in London, from whose designs this "New Brig" was erected 1786–88.—J. H.

§ Five lamp-posts with ornamented tops.—J. H.

Your ruin'd, formless bulk o' stane and lime,
Compare wi' bonie brigs o' modern time?
There's men of taste wou'd *tak* the Ducat stream,* take
Tho' they should cast the vera sark and swim,
E'er they would grate their feelings *wi'* the view with
O' *sic* an ugly, Gothic hulk as you. such

AULD BRIG.

Conceited *gowk!* puff'd up wi' windy pride! fool
This mony a year I've stood the flood and tide;
And tho' wi' crazy *eild* I'm sair *forfairn*, old age worn
I'll be a brig when ye're a shapeless *cairn!* heap of stones
As yet ye little ken about the matter,
But twa-three winters will inform ye better.
When heavy, dark, continued, a'-day rains,
Wi' deepening deluges o'erflow the plains;
When from the hills where springs the brawling Coil,
Or stately Lugar's mossy fountains boil;
Or where the Greenock winds his moorland course,
Or haunted Garpal † draws his feeble source,
Arous'd by blustering winds an' spotting *thowes*, thaws
In mony a torrent down the *snaw-broo rowes;* snow-water rolls
While crashing ice, borne on the roaring *spate*, flood
Sweeps dams, an' mills, an' brigs, *a' to the gate;* all away
And from Glenbuck, ‡ down to the Ratton-key, §
Auld Ayr is just one lengthen'd, tumbling sea—
Then down ye'll hurl, (deil nor ye never rise!)
And dash the *gumlie jaups* up to the pouring skies! muddy splashes
A lesson sadly teaching, to your cost,
That Architecture's noble art is lost! ||

---

* A noted ford, just above the Auld Brig.—*R. B.*

† The banks of Garpal Water is one of the few places in the West of Scotland where those fancy-scaring visions, known by the name of Ghaists, still continue pertinaciously to inhabit.—*R. B.*

‡ The source of the River Ayr.—*R. B.*

§ A small landing place above the large quay.—*R. B.*

|| This whole passage—penned ninety years ago—has turned out to be strikingly prophetic. The "New Brig," which was not yet "streekit owre frae bank to

NEW BRIG.

Fine architecture, trowth, I needs must say't o't,
The L—d be thankit that we've *tint* the lost
gate o't! way of it
Gaunt, ghastly, ghaist-alluring edifices,
Hanging with threat'ning jut like precipices;
O'er-arching, mouldy, gloom-inspiring coves,
Supporting roofs, fantastic, stony groves;
Windows and doors in nameless sculptures drest,
With order, symmetry, or taste unblest;
Forms like some bedlam Statuary's dream,
The craz'd creations of misguided whim;
Forms might be worship'd on the bended knee,
And still the second dread command be free;
Their likeness is not found on earth, in air, or sea!
Mansions that would disgrace the building taste
Of any mason reptile, bird or beast:
Fit only for a *doited* monkish race, stupid
Or frosty maids forsworn the dear embrace,
Or *cuifs* of later times, wha held the notion, blockheads
That sullen gloom was stirling true devotion:
Fancies that our *guid Brugh* denies protection,* good burgh
And soon may they expire, unblest wi' resurrection!

AULD BRIG.

O ye, my dear-remember'd, ancient *yealings*, coevals
Were ye but here to share my wounded feelings!
Ye worthy *Proveses*, an' mony a Bailie, provosts
Wha in the paths o' righteousness did toil ay;
Ye dainty Deacons, an' ye *douce* Conveeners,† decent
To whom our moderns are but *causey-cleaners;* scavengers

---

bank" when the poem was composed, has, on at least one occasion, been closed from all traffic, a threatening rent having been discovered in its masonry. On the other hand, the "Auld Brig" with its "poor narrow foot-path of a street," which for eighty years has been used for foot passengers only, has again been opened for wheel carriages, and may yet be "a brig," when its proud neighbor is "a shapeless cairn."

* A compliment to the "advanced liberalism" of the Ayr clergy.

† Deacons and Conveners are trade or guild dignitaries.—J. H.

Ye godly Councils, wha hae blest this town;
Ye godly Brethren o' the sacred gown,
Wha meekly *gie* your *hurdies* to the smiters; give buttocks
And (what would now be strange),* ye godly
Writers; lawyers
A' ye douce folk I've borne *aboon* the *broo*, above flood
Were ye but here, what would ye say or do?
How would your spirits groan in deep vexation,
To see each melancholy alteration;
And, agonising, curse the time and place
When ye begat the base degenerate race!
Nae langer rev'rend men, their country's glory,
In plain braid Scots hold forth a plain, braid story;
Nae langer thrifty citizens, an' douce,
Meet *owre* a pint, or in the Council-house; over
But *staumrel*, corky-headed, graceless Gentry, half-witted
The *herryment* and ruin of the country; spoliation
Men, three-parts made by tailors and by barbers,
Wha waste your *weel-hain'd gear* on d—'d well-saved money
new brigs and harbors!

NEW BRIG.

Now *haud* you there! for faith ye've said enough, hold
And *muckle mair* than ye can *mak to through*. much more prove
As for your Priesthood, I shall say but little,
Corbies and Clergy are a shot right *kittle:* crows ticklish
But, under favor o' your langer beard,
Abuse o' Magistrates might weel be spar'd;
To liken them to your auld-warld squad,
I must needs say, comparisons are odd.
In Ayr, wag-wits nae mair can hae a handle
To mouth 'a Citizen,' a term o' scandal;
Nae mair the Council waddles down the street,
In all the pomp of ignorant conceit;

* A sly hit at the Ayr lawyers (writers) of Burns' Day.—J. H.

Men wha grew wise *priggin* owre hops an' raisins, huckstering
Or gather'd lib'ral views in Bonds and Seisins:
If haply Knowledge, on a random tramp,
Had *shor'd* them with a glimmer of his lamp, guided
And would to Common-sense for once betray'd them,
Plain, dull Stupidity stept kindly in to aid them.

What farther clish-ma-claver might been said,
What bloody wars, if Sprites had blood to shed,
No man can tell; but, all before their sight,
A fairy train appear'd in order bright;
Adown the glittering stream they featly danc'd;
Bright to the moon their various dresses glanc'd:
They footed o'er the wat'ry glass so neat,
The infant ice scarce bent beneath their feet:
While arts of Minstrelsy among them rung,
And soul-ennobling Bards heroic ditties sung.

O had M'Lauchlan,* *thairm*-inspiring sage, catgut
Been there to hear this heavenly band engage,
When thro' his dear strathspeys† they bore with Highland rage;
Or when they struck old Scotia's melting airs,
The lover's raptured joys or bleeding cares;
How would his Highland *lug* been nobler fir'd, ear
And ev'n his matchless hand with finer touch inspir'd!
No guess could tell what instrument appear'd,
But all the soul of Music's self was heard;
Harmonious concert rung in every part,
While simple melody pour'd moving on the heart.

The Genius of the Stream in front appears,
A venerable Chief advanc'd in years;

---

* A well-known performer of Scottish music on the violin.—*R. B.*

† A general term for cheerful Scottish dance-tunes, from Strathspey (or the Vale of the river Spey) in Inverness-shire. Originally the word meant dance-music for the bagpipe, but it is now applied to all Scottish tunes of this character.—J. H.

His hoary head with water-lilies crown'd,
His manly leg with garter-tangle bound.
Next came the loveliest pair in all the ring,
Sweet female Beauty hand in hand with Spring;
Then, crown'd with flow'ry hay, came Rural Joy,
And Summer, with his fervid-beaming eye;
All-cheering Plenty, with her flowing horn,
Led yellow Autumn wreath'd with nodding corn;
Then Winter's time-bleach'd locks did hoary show,
By Hospitality with cloudless brow:
Next follow'd Courage with his martial stride,
From where the Feal wild-woody coverts hide;*
Benevolence, with mild, benignant air,
A female form, came from the tow'rs of Stair;†
Learning and Worth in equal measures trode,
From simple Catrine, their long-lov'd abode,‡
Last, white-rob'd Peace, crown'd with a hazel wreath,
To rustic Agriculture did bequeath
The broken, iron instruments of death:
At sight of whom our Sprites forgat their kindling wrath.

[The gentleman to whom the foregoing poem is inscribed, was one of those in the town of Ayr, who befriended Burns, at a somewhat later date than Mr. Aiken. There is no reference to him in the earliest edition of Burns's poems; but an important letter to him occurs in the poet's correspondence so early as the middle of April 1786. See Vol. 1, p. 386. Mr. Ballantine, by profession a banker, was Dean of Guild at that period, and afterwards became Provost of Ayr. The erection of a new bridge, intended to supersede an ancient structure which was inconveniently narrow for traffic, was proceeding under his chief magistracy in the latter portion of 1786, and Burns, apparently taking a hint from Fergusson's "Dialogue between the *Plainstanes*§ and Causeway," composed his poem of "The

* A compliment to the warlike Montgomeries of Coilsfield. The Feal or Faile Water flows through the grounds behind the mansion, and joins the Ayr at Fealford.

† A compliment to Mrs. Stewart of Stair.

‡ Catrine is a manufacturing village near Mauchline on the Ayr. Professor Dugald Stewart dwelt in Catrine House the adjoining villa or mansion.—J. H.

§ The "Plainstanes" of a Scotch town is the sidewalk on the principal street,

Brigs of Ayr," about the end of September. His main object was to swell the bulk of a second Ayrshire edition of his poems which was then proposed, but soon abandoned for the bolder project of publishing in Edinburgh. Another purpose served by this poem was to shew his gratitude to Mr. Ballantine in the same manner as had been done in the "Cotter's Saturday Night" toward Mr. Aiken.

The variations which we append to this note, are taken from an early copy, and the comparison shews that the author, when in Edinburgh, without altering the main design and the general effect of the poem, greatly improved some of its details.

Professor Walker seems to doubt Burns's capability of successfully carrying through any very long and elaborate work. He remarks that our author's opportunities of composition were "desultory and uncertain. When a favorite idea laid hold of his mind, he would cherish it till his heated imagination threw it off in verse; and when the paroxysm ceased, he was done with it." Mr. Walker illustrates his observation by instancing the present poem thus:—"It opens with a description to which nothing superior can be found in the records of poetry. The spirits of the Brigs then begin their controversy, which is no less admirable; but the altercation breaks off, and the poem makes a transition into a different strain. A train of allegorical beings are introduced in a dance upon the ice; and though this part contains some beautiful lines, yet it does not harmonize exactly with what follows, for had the poet foreseen that his group was to contain personages of so grave and dignified a character as Learning, Worth, and Peace he would scarcely have engaged them in the violent and merry movements of a strathspey. This piece exhibits very plainly the *disjecta membra poetæ*, but it is surely deficient in unity of design."

("This brilliant satirical fiction," says Waddell, "is remarkable for three things: (1) The beauty of its impersonations, the vividness of its descriptions, the humor of its morals: (2) The considerable intermixture of the English idiom with the richest and most expressive Scotch; and (3) The singular fact that it finishes without an appropriate close, and dies away like a dream, in—nothing.—J. H.)

Mr. John Ballantine of Ayr lived a bachelor, and died at his villa of Castlehill, on 15th July 1812.

The variations found in the early draft of this poem are the following:—

After line 54 two lines were afterwards suppressed—

> Or penitential pangs for former sins
> Led him to rove by quondam Merran Din's.

---

where the more important citizens resort for their afternoon stroll and gossip. It is so-called from having been the earliest part in the town to be paved or made "plain."—J. H.

Lines 65 and 66 read

> When lo! before our Bardie's wond'ring e'en
> The Brigs of Ayr's twa sprites are seen,

After line 175 two lines are now suppressed,

> That's ay a string auld doyted greybeards harp on,
> A topic for their peevishness to carp on.

At line 184 the following important variation appears

> Nae mair down street the council quorum waddles,
> With wigs like mainsails on their logger noddles,
> Nae difference but bulkiest or tallest,
> With comfortable dullness in for ballast;
> Nor shoals nor currents need a pilot's caution,
> For, regularly slow, they only witness motion.
> Men wha grew, &c.

LINES TO MR. JOHN KENNEDY.

(CUNNINGHAM'S ED., 1834.)

FAREWELL, dear friend! may gude luck hit you,
And 'mang her favorites admit you:
If e'er Detraction *shore* to *smit* you, threaten affect
May nane believe him,
And *ony* deil that thinks to get you, any
Good Lord, deceive him!

[The above forms the concluding part of a letter to the same friend to whom he addressed the lines at page 256, Vol. I. This letter was written from Kilmarnock, undated, but evidently early in August, when he was in that town in connection with the publication of his book, for he says:—"I have at last made my public appearance, and am solemnly inaugurated into the numerous class. Could I have got a carrier, you should have had a score of vouchers for my authorship."]

LINES TO AN OLD SWEETHEART.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

ONCE fondly lov'd, and still remember'd dear,
  Sweet early object of my youthful vows,
Accept this mark of friendship, warm, sincere,
  Friendship! 'tis all cold duty now allows.

And when you read the simple artless rhymes,
  One friendly sigh for him—he asks no more,
Who, distant, burns in flaming torrid climes,
  Or haply lies beneath th' Atlantic roar.

[These lines appeared in Currie's first edition, but were, along with some other very interesting pieces, withdrawn in future editions of his work,—even Gilbert Burns omitting to restore them in 1820. The poet gave them a place in his MS. collection made for Captain Riddell, where we find the following heading and note attached:—"Written on the blank leaf of a copy of the first edition of my Poems, which I presented to an old sweetheart, then married.—'Twas the girl I mentioned in my letter to Dr. Moore, where I speak of taking the sun's altitude. Poor Peggy! Her husband is my old acquaintance, and a most worthy fellow. When I was taking leave of my Carrick relations, intending to go to the West Indies, when I took farewell of her, neither she nor I could speak a syllable. Her husband escorted me three miles on my road, and we both parted with tears." See pp. 3 and 50, Vol. I.]

LINES WRITTEN ON A BANK-NOTE.

(GILBERT BURNS' ED., 1820.)

WAE worth thy power, thou cursed leaf, woe be to!
Fell source o' a' my woe and grief!
For lack o' thee I've lost my lass,
For lack o' thee I *scrimp* my glass: stint

I see the children of affliction
Unaided, through thy curst restriction:
I've seen the oppressor's cruel smile
Amid his hapless victim's spoil;
And for thy potence vainly wished,
To crush the villain in the dust:
For lack o' thee, I leave this much-lov'd shore,
Never, perhaps, to greet old Scotland more.

R. B.

KYLE.

[The note is for one pound of the Bank of Scotland's issue, 1st March 1780. Internal evidence shows that the lines were written about August 1786, when he contemplated leaving Scotland. So far as appears, they were first printed, in the "Morning Chronicle" of 27th May 1814, from which they were transferred to the "Scots Magazine" for September of same year. The original had come into the hands of Mr. James F. Gracie banker in Dumfries, who recognizing the handwriting kept it as a curiosity. Both the handwriting and the composition attest its genuineness as a production of Burns.]

STANZAS ON *NAETHING*. nothing

EXTEMPORE EPISTLE TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

(ALEX. SMITH'S ED., 1865.)

To you, sir, this summons I've sent,
Pray, whip till the *pownie* is *fraething*; pony / frothing
But if you demand what I want,
I honestly answer you—naething.

Ne'er scorn a poor Poet like me,
For idly just living and breathing,
While people of every degree
Are busy employed about—naething.

Poor Centum-per-centum may fast,
  And *grumble* his *hurdies* their grudge buttocks
    claithing, clothing
He'll find, when the balance is cast,
  He's *gane* to the devil for—naething. gone

The courtier cringes and bows,
  Ambition has likewise its plaything;
A coronet beams on his brows;
  And what is a coronet?—naething.

Some quarrel the Presbyter gown,
  Some quarrel Episcopal *graithing;* vestments
But every good fellow will own
  The quarrel is a' about—naething.

The lover may sparkle and glow,
  Approaching his *bonie bit* gay thing; pretty little
But marriage will soon let him know
  He's gotten—a *buskit-up* naething. dressed-up

The Poet may jingle and rhyme,
  In hopes of a laureate wreathing,
And when he has wasted his time,
  He's kindly rewarded wi'—naething.

The thundering bully may rage,
  And swagger and swear like a heathen;
But collar him fast, I'll engage,
  You'll find that his courage is—naething.

Last night wi' a feminine *whig*—*
  A poet she couldna put faith in;
But soon we grew lovingly *big*, close friends
  I taught her, her terrors were naething.

---

* Whig was the nickname originally applied to the Ayrshire Cameronians in derision of their whig- or whey-colored complexions. Later it was transferred

Her whigship was wonderful pleased,
  But charmingly tickled *wi' ae* thing; with one
Her fingers I lovingly squeezed,
  And kissed her, and promised her—naething.

The priest anathèmas may threat—
  Predicament, sir, that we're *baith* in;* both
But when honor's reveillé is beat,
  The holy artillery's naething.

And now I must mount on the wave—
  My voyage perhaps there is death in;
But what is a watery grave?
  The drowning a Poet is naething.

And now, as grim death's in my thought,
  To you, sir, I make this bequeathing;
My service as long as ye've ought,
  And my friendship, by God, when ye've naething.

[This piece was recorded by the author in the collection of unpublished poems made by him for his friend Riddell of Glenriddell. Alexander Smith obtained it in one of the many manuscript scroll books of the poet which Dr. Currie declined to make use of in compiling his edition and biography. It is supposed to have been presented by Burns to Mrs. Dunlop sometime in the year 1788. It seems to have passed through several hands, and at each remove to have been denuded of some of its pages. In a tattered condition it came at last into the hands of Mr. Macmillan, the London publisher of Smith's edition of Burns. That editor remarks that "the last stanza is almost identical in thought and expression with the closing lines of the well-known Dedication to Gavin Hamilton." That last stanza, together with the one immediately preceding, fixes the date of this characteristic effusion as about August 1786.]

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to the Seceders or first dissenters from the Established Church, on account of their assumption of superior sanctity. It is in this latter sense Burns uses the word here. She was a lady of very severe virtue.—J. H.

* Both were in trouble with their Session, but for different reasons.—J. H.

THE FAREWELL.

(REV. H. PAUL'S ED., 1819.)

The valiant, in himself, what can he suffer?
Or what does he regard his single woes?
But when, alas! he multiplies himself,
To dearer selves, to the lov'd tender fair,
To those whose bliss, whose beings hang upon him,
To helpless children,—then, Oh then he feels
The point of misery festering in his heart,
And weakly weeps his fortunes like a coward:
Such, such am I!—undone!

THOMSON'S *Edward and Eleanora.*

FAREWELL, old Scotia's bleak domains,
Far dearer than the torrid plains,
  Where rich ananas blow!
Farewell, a mother's blessing dear!
A brother's sigh! a sister's tear!
  My Jean's heart-rending throe!
Farewell, my Bess! tho' thou'rt bereft
  Of my paternal care,
A faithful brother I have left,
  My part in him thou'lt share!
    Adieu too, to you too,
      My Smith, my bosom frien';
    When kindly you mind me,
      O then befriend my Jean!

What bursting anguish tears my heart;
From thee, my Jeany, must I part!
  Thou, weeping, answ'rest—'No!'
Alas! misfortune stares my face,
And points to ruin and disgrace,
  I for thy sake must go!
Thee, Hamilton, and Aiken dear,
  A grateful, warm adieu:
I, with a much-indebted tear,
  Shall still remember you!

All-hail then, the gale then,
  Wafts me from thee, dear shore!
It rustles, and whistles
  I'll never see thee more!

[The author's painful anticipation of "Jean's heart-rending throe" in this effusion, seems to prove that it was composed prior to 3rd September 1786, at which date she was delivered of twins, a boy and a girl. It is observable in the poet's correspondence and other productions after that event, that he seems less disposed to carry out his resolution to go abroad. The admiration everywhere expressed for the lately published poems, began to throw a lustre on the name of Burns, and to point his way to a better fate than exile in a torrid clime. The birth of these children, and the improved prospects of the bard, inclined old Mr. Armour to come to honorable terms with him. It was agreed that the Mossgiel family should adopt the boy, while Jean herself took charge of the girl, thus dividing the burden of maintenance between both parties.

A letter penned by Burns to Robert Muir shortly after the event, indicates the pleasant turn which matters had taken:—"You will have heard that Armour has repaid me double. A very fine boy and girl have awakened a thought and feelings that thrill, some with tender pleasure, and some with foreboding anguish, through my soul.

"I believe all hopes of staying at home will be abortive, but more of this when, in the latter part of next week, we shall meet."]

THE CALF.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

To the Rev. JAMES STEVEN, on his text, MALACHI, ch. iv. vers. 2. "And ye shall go forth, and grow up, as CALVES of the stall."

RIGHT, sir! your text I'll prove it true,
  Tho' heretics may laugh;
For instance, there's yoursel just now,
  God knows, an *unco calf.* uncommon

And should some patron be so kind,
  As bless you wi' a kirk,*
I doubt na, sir, but then we'll find,
  Ye're still as great a *stirk.* young steer

But, if the lover's raptur'd hour,
  Shall ever be your lot,
Forbid it, ev'ry heavenly Power,
  You e'er should be a *stot!* bullock

Tho', when some kind connubial dear
  Your but-an'-ben † adorns,
The like has been that—you may wear
  A noble head of *horns.*

And, in your *lug*, most reverend James, ear
  To hear you roar and *rowte*, bellow
Few men o' sense will doubt your claims
  To rank amang the *nowte.* nolts or black cattle

And when ye're number'd wi' the dead,
  Below a grassy hillock,
With justice they may mark your head—
  "Here lies a famous *bullock!*"

[The eventful Sunday, 3d September 1786, which produced the poet's twins towards evening, brought forth this effusion at the morning service in Mauchline kirk. Burns had called upon Mr. Gavin Hamilton in his way thither, expecting his friend might be going there too. Mr. Hamilton declined going, but requested the poet to bring him a note of the discourse in not fewer than four stanzas of rhyme. A bet was made between them on the point, and accordingly Burns presented four of the above verses to Hamilton immediately after forenoon service. Dr. Mackenzie happened to look in at Mr. Hamilton's at the same time, and was so tickled with the performance that he extracted from the

* See Note on patronage and patrons at "Twa Dogs," page 207, Vol. I.
† See Note on "The Vision," page 234, Vol. I.

poet a promise of a copy, which reached him on the evening of same day. That copy, with two extra verses (the fourth and sixth of the text), is now in possession of his son, John Whitefoord Mackenzie, Esq., Edinburgh, by whose kindness we are enabled to publish a note from Burns which accompanied the poem.

The Rev. James Steven, a native of Kilmarnock, was at this time the young assistant of the Rev. Robert Dow, of Ardrossan. On the present occasion he merely interchanged pulpits with Mr. Auld. In 1787 he was called to London (Crown Court Chapel), and in 1803 was presented to the parochial charge of Kilwinning. He obtained the degree of D. D., and died in 1817. His second son, Charles, became minister of Stewarton.]

(The cause assigned for the caustic severity of the piece is the ostentatious style and manner of the young preacher. Waddell says that in Burns's own edition the text was misquoted, *they* being substituted for *ye* in the text.—J. H.)

SONG—WILLIE CHALMERS.

(Lockhart's Life of Burns, 1829.)

Mr. Chalmers, a gentleman in Ayrshire, a particular friend of mine, asked me to write a poetic epistle to a young lady, his Dulcinea. I had seen her, but was scarcely acquainted with her, and wrote as follows:—

Wi' *braw* new *branks* in *mickle* pride, fine bridle / much
And eke a braw new *brechan*, horse-collar
My Pegasus I'm got astride,
And up Parnassus *pechin;* panting
Whiles *owre* a bush wi' downward crush, over
The *doited beastie* stammers; crazed animal
Then up he gets, and off he sets,
For sake o' Willie Chalmers.

I doubt na, lass, that *weel kenn'd* name well-known
May cost a pair o' blushes;
I am nae stranger to your fame,
Nor his warm urged wishes.

Your bonie face, sae mild and sweet,
His honest heart enamors,
And faith ye'll no be lost a whit,
Tho' *wair'd* on Willie Chalmers. spent

Auld Truth hersel might swear ye're fair,
And Honor safely back her;
And Modesty assume your air,
And ne'er a ane mistak her:
And *sic* twa love-inspiring een such
Might fire even holy palmers;
Nae wonder then they've fatal been
To honest Willie Chalmers.

I doubt na fortune may you *shore* put in your way
Some *mim-mou'd*, *pouther'd* priestie, affectedly prim, powdered
Fu' lifted up wi' Hebrew lore, puffed up
And *band upon his breastie:**
But oh! what signifies to you
His lexicons and grammars;
The feeling heart's the royal blue,
And that's wi' Willie Chalmers.

Some gapin', *glowrin* countra *laird* stupidly staring land-owner
May *warsle* for your favor; wrestle
May *claw* his *lug*, and *straik* his beard, scratch ear stroke
And *hoast* up some palaver: cough
My bonie maid, before ye wed
Sic clumsy-witted hammers, such
Seek heaven for help, and *barefit skelp* barefooted skip
Awa wi' Willie Chalmers.

Forgive the Bard! my fond regard
For ane that shares my bosom,

---

* The band worn by a Presbyterian minister after he has got a charge. Mere preachers cannot wear the band, so the supposed "priestie" is proud of being "a placed minister."—J. H.

Inspires my Muse to *gie 'm* his dues, give him
For deil a hair I roose him.*
May powers *aboon* unite you soon, above
And fructify your amours,
And every year come in *mair* dear more
To you and Willie Chalmers.

[This curious piece was obtained by Mr. Lockhart from Lady Harriet Don, with the explanation as above prefixed, in the poet's own words. His model for the versification was an old Scottish lyric, entitled "Omnia vincit Amor," which will be found in the "Tea Table Miscellany," and also in Johnson's *Museum.*

The reader will afterwards see an interesting letter, which was addressed by the poet to "Willie Chalmers" from Edinburgh, shortly after his arrival there. He was a writer and notary public in Ayr, who executed the notarial intimation of the poet's assignation in favor of Gilbert Burns, on 24th July 1786. He was also commissioned under a mock mandate, dated 20th November thereafter, to superintend the public burning of a certain "nefarious, abominable, and wicked song or ballad" enclosed to him by Burns, just before leaving Ayrshire for Edinburgh.

Lady Harriet Don was sister of the poet's patron Lord Glencairn. She first met him during his Border tour on 12th May 1787, and his remark is—"Dine with Sir Alexander Don, a pretty clever fellow, but far from being a match for his divine lady."]

REPLY TO A TRIMMING EPISTLE RECEIVED FROM A TAILOR.

(Stewart and Meikle's Tracts, 1799.)

What ails ye now, ye lousie b—h,
To thresh my back at *sic* a pitch? such
Losh, man! hae mercy wi' your *natch*, grip
Your bodkin's *bauld;* bold
I dinna suffer half sae much
Frae Daddie Auld.†

---

* Not a hairbreadth do I over-praise him.—J. H.
† When before the Session. See Vol. I. p. 67.

What tho' at times, when I grow *crouse*, courageous
I gie their *wames* a random *pouse*, bellies push
Is that enough for you to *souse* sauce
Your servant *sae?* so
Gae mind your seam, ye prick-the-louse, go
An' *jag-the-flae!* stick-the-flea

King David, o' poetic brief,
Wrocht 'mang the lasses sic mischief wrought
As fill'd his after-life wi' grief,
An' bluidy *rants*,* disturbances
An yet he's rank'd amang the chief
O' lang-syne *saunts.* saints

And maybe, Tam, for a' my *cants*, tricks
My wicked rhymes, an' drucken *rants*, sprees
I'll *gie* auld cloven Clootie's † haunts give
An *unco* slip yet, unexpected
An' snugly sit amang the saunts,
At Davie's‡ hip yet!

But, *fegs!* the Session says I *maun* faith must
Gae fa' upo' anither plan go fall
Than *garrin* lasses coup the *cran*, § making head
Clean heels owre body,
An' sairly *thole* their mother's ban endure
Afore the *howdy.* midwife

This leads me on to tell for sport,
How I did wi' the Session *sort;* get along
Auld Clinkum,‖ at the inner port,
Cried three times, "Robin!

---

* In allusion to the troubles David had with Absalom.—J. H.

† The D—l, so called from his cloven hoofs.—J. H.

‡ King David's. Burns was fond of likening himself to the poet King of Israel. —J. H.

§ Making girls have children.—J. H.

‖ Old Clinkumbell. He acted as bell-ringer and beadle, and, in his latter capacity, it was his duty to summon culprits before the Session.—J. H.

Cabrini College Library

Come hither lad, and answer for't,
Ye're blam'd for jobbin!"

Wi' pinch I put a Sunday's face on, with difficulty
An' *snoov'd* awa' before the Session: moved demurely
I made an open, fair confession—
I scorned to lee,
An syne Mess John, beyond expression,
Fell foul o' me. rebuked

A fornicator-*lown* he call'd me, rascal
An' said my faut frae bliss expell'd me;
I own'd the tale was true he tell'd me,
"But, what the matter?
(*Quo'* I) I fear unless ye *geld* me, quoth castrate
I'll ne'er be better!"

"Geld you! (quo' he) *an' what for no?* and why not
If that your right hand, leg, or toe
Should ever prove your spiritual foe,
You should remember
To cut it aff—an' what for no?—
Your dearest member!"

"Na, na, (quo' I,) I'm no for that,
Gelding's nae better than 'tis *ca't;* called
I'd rather suffer for my faut,
A hearty *flewit,* castigation
As *sair owre* hip as ye can draw 't, sore over
Tho' I should rue it."

"Or, *gin* ye like to end the bother, if
To please us a'—I've just *ae ither*— one other (*proposal*)
When next wi' yon lass I *forgather,* meet
Whate'er betide it,
I'll frankly gie her 't *a' thegither,* altogether
An' let her guide it."

But, sir, this pleas'd them *warst of a'*, worst of all
An' therefore, Tam, when that I saw,
I said "Gude night," *an' cam' awa'*, and came off
An' left the Session;
I saw they were resolvèd a'
On my oppression.

[This rich performance (of its kind) has been reprinted, in a more or less complete form, in most of the standard editions of Burns's poems, since it first appeared. The Aldine, which gave it unmutilated, remarks that Cunningham "very decorously omitted the last five stanzas." As we do not approve of presenting an author's production in a garbled state, we prefer giving this piece entire, rather than to omit it altogether. We come to this conclusion the more readily, that we may have an opportunity of recording our dissent from a certain class of the poet's annotators, who affect to disbelieve that he had any hand in its composition.

The person to whom it is addressed was Thomas Walker, a tailor resident at Pool, near the village of Ochiltree. He was in terms of intimacy with William Simson, the parish schoolmaster there, to whom Burns addressed the poetical Epistle given at page 115 Vol. I. The tailor was rather an eccentric character, and could string rhymes together as fluently, if not so much to the point, as could his friend the Latin Schoolmaster. Having seen Burns's epistle to Simson, which was extracted from the poet of Mossgiel by way of reply to a complimentary letter addressed to him by the dominie, Walker conceived that he might experience the same good-fortune by sending the poet a brotherly epistle. Accordingly he composed and strung together a dreary performance of twenty-six stanzas, in Burns's favorite measure, and despatched it to Mossgiel by a secure hand. Here is a sample of the contents, taken from Tom's own recorded copy in his MS. collection:—

"Had I a night o' thee or twa,
An' guid tobacco for to blaw,
Altho' it was baith frost and snaw,
I wadna weary;
The crack thou could sae brawly ca',
An' keep me cheery.

Or could we meet some Mauchline Fair—
I sometimes tak a bottle there—
Thou'd be as welcome to a share
As thou could'st be;
Wae worth the purse that wadna spare
A drink to thee!"

As may well be conjectured, Burns was not to be caught by such bait as this: by and by, however, the publication of the Kilmarnock volume, seemed, in Tom's eyes, a fair opportunity for renewing the attempt to extract a reply from the poet. He changed his tactics, however, and tried the experiment of rousing the poet by assuming the character of a moral censor. He fortunately exhibited his performance to Simson before despatching it, by whose advice the epistle was reduced in extent from twenty-one to ten stanzas. This required some re-arrangement and alterations, which the schoolmaster managed with so much skill, that it has been suggested that Burns himself may have been the author of the "Trimming epistle" as well as the reply to it. Walker's second performance is also extant, in his own manuscript, and on comparing the original with the "Epistle from a Tailor," as printed by Stewart, the conviction is forced upon us that Simson had as much to do with its composition as Walker had. We print it entire.

EPISTLE FROM A TAILOR.

THOMAS WALKER, OCHILTREE, TO ROBERT BURNS.

What *waefu'* news is this I hear, — woeful
Frae greeting I can scarce forbear, — from weeping
Folk tells me, ye're *gawn aff* this year, — going off
Out o'er the sea, — away across
And lasses wham ye lo'e sae dear
Will greet for thee.

Weel *wad* I like *war* ye to stay, — would were
But Robin, since ye will away,
I hae a word yet mair to say,
And maybe twa;
May He protect us night and day,
That made us a'.

Whar thou art *gaun*, keep mind frae me, — going
Seek him to bear thee companie,
And, Robin, whan ye come to dee,
Ye'll *won aboon*, — get above
And live at peace and unity
Ayont the moon. — beyond

Some tell me, Rab, ye dinna fear
To get a wean, and curse and swear,
I'm *unco wae*, my lad, to hear — very sorry
O' *sic* a trade, — such
Could I persuade ye to forbear,
I *wad* be glad. — would

Fu' weel ye ken ye'll gang to hell,
Gin ye persist in doing ill— — if
Waes me! ye're *hurlin'* down the hill — riding
Withouten dread,
And ye'll get leave to swear your fill
After ye're dead.

There *walth* o' women ye'll get near, plenty
But gettin' weans ye will forebear,
Ye'll never say, my bonnie dear,
Come, gie's a kiss—
Nae kissing there—ye'll *girn* and sneer, grin
And *ither* hiss. each other

O Rab! *lay by* thy foolish tricks, abandon
And *steer nae mair* the female sex, touch no more
Or some day ye'll come through the pricks,
And that ye'll see,
Ye'll fin' hard living wi' Auld Nicks—
I'm wae for thee.

But what's this comes wi' sic a knell,
Amaist as loud as ony bell,
While it does mak' my conscience tell
Me what is true?
I'm but a ragged *cowt* mysel', colt
Owre sib to you! too much akin

We're owre like those wha think it fit,
To stuff their noddles fu' o' wit,
And yet content in darkness sit,
Wha shun the light,
Wad let them see to 'scape the pit
That lang dark night.

But fareweel, Rab, I *maun awa*, must be off
May he that made us keep us a',
For that would be a dreadfu' fa'
And hurt us sair,
Lad, ye wad never mend ava,
Sae, Rab, tak' care.

("No wonder," says Allan Cunningham, "that Burns said his success produced a shoal of ill-spawned monsters in Scottish verse; the tailor, however, was one of the worst. I have heard it surmised that Burns wrote the monitory letter himself for the sake of the answer. To be able to write down to the level of the verses I have quoted is a compliment to his genius, but not a just one." The verses quoted by Cunningham are the 5th and 6th of the above piece.—J. H.)

[Both Simson, who died in 1815, and Walker, who was buried in Sorn a few years earlier, saw Stewart's publication attributing the authorship of the verses in the text to Burns. Never during the lifetime of those worthies, and not till a quarter of a century thereafter, did any writer ever venture to deny the authorship of the *Reply* verses to Burns.

We have already adverted to the fact that John Richmond of Mauchline was uncle to Thomas Stewart, the printer and publisher. This at once suggests that Burns had consigned both the "Tailor's Epistle" and a copy of his own "Reply" to Richmond, the Clerk

of the "Court of Equity," and that through this source the documents passed into that publisher's hands.

To the kindness of the Rev. David Hogg, Kirkmahoe, we are indebted for the use of Tom Walker's manuscripts above referred to. In early life, that gentleman acted as assistant to William Simson's brother Patrick, in the parish-school of Ochiltree, and obtained Walker's manuscripts from the tailor's representatives in Pool. Walker appears to have at length come out as an author; for James Paterson records, in his "Contemporaries of Burns," that he published a pamphlet called 'A Picture of the World."]

(Perhaps no piece associated with Burns has been the subject of so much controversy in regard to its authorship as this Epistle. Mr. Douglas, it will be seen from the above note, considers the silence of critics during Simson's and Walker's lifetime, as strong evidence of its genuineness. But are not the facts, that it appears in no edition of the poet published when he was in life, that no trace of it is to be found in any of his Common-place books, nor any reference to it in his correspondence, equally conclusive in the contrary direction? Notwithstanding all that has been written *pro* and *con* on the subject, it seems to me that we are left to base our decision very much on the internal evidence furnished by the piece. Of this every one must judge for himself. For myself, I frankly acknowledge that this evidence, strengthened by the testimony of my valued friend, Mr. Hogg, as recorded below, inclines me to scepticism.

Waddell has in his Appendix an interesting article on imitations of Burns, from which we make the following extract bearing on this vexed point:—

By far the best of these imitations, however, was the first—the "Epistle to a Tailor"—by "Winsome Willie;" but even that, on careful reading, is found to be intrinsically defective. This "Epistle," which appeared for the first time, along with "The Kirk's Alarm," "Holy Willie's Prayer," &c., in Stewart's piratical edition — Glasgow, 1801 — and has been quoted with great and strange admiration since by Cunningham and others, as being, if not genuine, at least worthy of Burns, originated in this wise, as we learn from the unquestionable authority of an esteemed friend, Rev. Mr. Hogg, of Kirkmahoe, in whose hands a whole MS. volume of Simson's poetry and all the documents more particularly in question, we believe, are now to be found. Simson, it appears, when teacher at Ochiltree, had a rhyming neighbor, Thomas Walker by name, and a tailor by trade; who, besides a little metrical correspondence with Simson himself, was extremely anxious to have the honor of an "Epistle" from Burns. To procure this, he addressed a somewhat verbose, although laughable enough complimentary letter to Burns, in the favorite epistolary

rhyming style then common in Scotland—to which, however, no reply was received. This neglect on our Author's part gave offence to the ambitious artist, and another epistle,* not quite so respectful, and intended of course to be very witty, was despatched. This document may be found also in Stewart's edition. "No answer was received to this letter either," says our reverend correspondent, "and the poor tailor was sadly grieved, and almost demented, at the seeming slight. Day after day did he make his complaint to Simson of Burns's unkindness in not writing him. To gratify Tom's ardent longings, Simson wrote in Burns's name the poem entitled "Epistle to a Tailor," and sent it to Pool (the cottage where Tom resided). Almost half naked, and ecstatic with joy, Walker rushed into Simson's school crying, "O Willie, Willie, I hae got ane noo; a clencher: read it, man, read it." With ill-restrained laughter he read it, and returned it to the tailor, who religiously preserved it till the day of his death, without ever discovering the hoax. A few days afterwards Simson met Burns, and reproached him for not writing to the tailor. Burns said, "Man, Willie, I aye intended to write to the bodie, but never got it dune." Simson then told the whole story, and read to him the answer he had sent in his name. Burns gave him a thump on the shoulder and said, "Od, Willie, ye hae thrashed the tailor far better than I could hae dune."—J. H.)

FRAGMENT OF SONG.

(BLACKIE'S "LAND OF BURNS," 1840.)

THE night was still, and o'er the hill
  The moon shone on the castle wa';
The *mavis* sang, while dew-drops hang — thrush
  Around her on the castle wa',
Sae merrily they danced the ring
  Frae e'enin' till the cock did craw;
And ay the *o'erword o'* the *spring* — refrain of song
  Was Irvine's bairns are bonie a'.

[It may be inferred that Burns first visited the manse of Dr. Lawrie at Newmilns about the close of September 1786. The poet's business in Kilmarnock, relating to the endeavor to effect the issue

* That printed above.

of a second Ayrshire edition, involved the necessity of several journeys to and from that town in October; and it is probable that he paid several visits to the manse about that period. Gilbert Burns informed Dr. Currie that the first time his brother heard the music of a piano-forte was there. "Dr. Lawrie (he said) had several accomplished daughters; one of them played the spinnet; the father and mother led down the dance; the rest of the sisters, the brother, the poet, and the other guests mixed in it. It was a delightful family scene for our poet, then lately introduced to the world."

The youngest daughter of Dr. Lawrie possessed, in the poet's holograph, the eight lines which form our text: it is apparently the mere scroll of something that was never more than a fragment. A relative of that lady supplied Mr. Robert Chambers with a copy of it, observing that—"There can be little doubt that the stanzas refer to the domestic circle and enjoyment of St. Margaret's Hill. The locality corresponds perfectly: the old castle of Newmilns, visible in those days from the manse windows, the hills opposite, to the south, and the actual scene of enjoyment, standing on the very banks of the Irvine. Some little poetic license must be allowed to the poet with respect to his lengthening the domestic dance so far on into the night."

On one of the poet's visits to this manse, the minister's man (John Brooks by name) did not present himself to render the usual services at the dinner-table. His attendance was dispensed with; but on being questioned afterwards by Mr. Archibald Lawrie regarding his absence, John's reply was held to be quite satisfactory. "Deed, sir, I was jist fleyed to come in, for fear Burns should mak a poem o' me!"]

EPIGRAM ON ROUGH ROADS.

(Kilmarnock, 1876.)

I'm now arrived—thanks to the gods!—
  Thro' pathways rough and muddy,
A certain sign that makin roads
  Is no this people's study:
Altho' I'm not wi' Scripture cram'd,
  I'm sure the Bible says
That heedless sinners shall be damn'd,
  Unless they mend their ways.

[This little *jeu d'esprit* bears as fair internal mark of Burns's hand as many things of the kind that have been laid to his charge. These rough roads which the poet had to traverse are supposed to have lain betwixt Kilmarnock and Stewarton. In the latter town, his uncle Robert resided in 1786; and at no great distance was Dunlop House, the residence of an important patron whom he acquired about this very period.

It is more than probable that Burns visited Mrs. Dunlop during this October, as Gilbert's narrative tells us that their acquaintanceship began just before he resolved to go to Edinburgh. He says, "Mrs. Dunlop sent off a person express to Mossgiel, distant fifteen or sixteen miles, with a very obliging letter desiring him to send her half a dozen copies of his poems, if he had them to spare, and begging he would do her the pleasure of calling at Dunlop House as soon as convenient."

Burns, during the whole of October, may be said to have oscillated like a pendulum betwixt Kyle and Cunningham.* In the earlier portion, he is busy negotiating with Wilson of Kilmarnock about a new edition. A few days later, he is traversing Galston Moor, composing his "Farewell to his native country." On the 23rd, he dines at Catrine House, and on the 26th, he is back to "Old Killie," to be made an honorary member of St. John's Lodge, there. Lastly, on the 30th, he is again at Mossgiel, inditing his epistle to Major Logan.]

PRAYER—O THOU DREAD POWER.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

Lying at a reverend friend's house one night, the author left the following verses in the room where he slept:—

O THOU dread Power, who reign'st above,
  I know thou wilt me hear,
When for this scene of peace and love,
  I make my prayer sincere.

The hoary Sire—the mortal stroke,
  Long, long be pleas'd to spare;

* Cunningham is the district of Ayrshire to the north of Kyle. Kyle is explained in note to "The Vision."—J. H.

To bless his little filial flock,
  And show what good men are.

She, who her lovely offspring eyes
  With tender hopes and fears,
O bless her with a mother's joys,
  But spare a mother's tears!

Their hope, their stay, their darling youth,
  In manhood's dawning blush,
Bless him, Thou God of love and truth,
  Up to a parent's wish.

The beauteous, seraph sister-band—
  With earnest tears I pray—
Thou know'st the snares on ev'ry hand,
  Guide Thou their steps alway.

When, soon or late, they reach that coast,
  O'er Life's rough ocean driven,
May they rejoice, no wand'rer lost,
  A family in Heaven!

[This "reverend friend" was George Lawrie, himself the son of a parish minister. He was ordained pastor of the parish of Loudon in 1763, and obtained the degree of D. D. in 1791. Born in 1729, he was fifty-seven years old at the period of Burns's visits to him in 1786. He survived the poet three years, dying in 1799, at the age of 70. His son Archibald succeeded to the pastorate of Loudon.

The wife of this amiable minister was Mary Campbell, daughter of Professor Archibald Campbell of St. Andrews. On the occasion that produced the admired verses which form the text, Burns had called at the manse after visiting Kilmarnock, where he had been frustrated in his hopes of a second Ayrshire edition, and cooped up to the prospect of sailing for the West Indies in a few days. Dr. Lawrie's children then comprised a son rising into manhood, and four daughters, the youngest being yet a girl. In the course of the evening, music and dancing were introduced, according to

Farewell to Ayr

"FAREWELL THE BONNIE BANKS OF AYR"

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the cheerful custom of the family. After a night's real enjoyment, the poet retired to rest, with feelings deeply touched by the simple refinement and mutual affection of the family, as well as by the marked attention which had been shewn to himself.

The above verses were composed by him during the night-watches, and were left in his bedroom next morning. A considerable part of the second day was spent by the poet at the manse; and after a kindly parting with the happy family, he pursued his way home across the moors of Galston, accompanied only by his Muse, who did not refuse her inspiration, as the following memorable effusion sufficiently evinces.]

FAREWELL SONG TO THE BANKS OF AYR.

Tune—"Roslin Castle."

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

"I composed this song as I conveyed my chest* so far on my road to Greenock, where I was to embark in a few days for Jamaica. I meant it as my farewell dirge to my native land."—*R. B.*

THE gloomy night is gath'ring fast,
Loud roars the wild, inconstant blast,
Yon murky cloud is foul with rain,
I see it driving o'er the plain;
The hunter now has left the moor,
The scatt'red coveys meet secure;
While here I wander, prest with care,
Along the lonely banks of Ayr.

The Autumn mourns her rip'ning corn
By early Winter's ravage torn;
Across her placid, azure sky,
She sees the scowling tempest fly:

* The first draft of these lines seems to have been suggested to Burns while he conveyed his chest so far on its way towards Greenock, while the poem was produced in its finished form, in the circumstances which he detailed to Dr. Blacklock, as narrated in the note at the end of this piece.—J. H.

Chill runs my blood to hear it rave;
I think upon the stormy wave,
Where many a danger I must dare,
Far from the bonie banks of Ayr.

'Tis not the surging billow's roar,
'Tis not that fatal, deadly shore;
Tho' death in ev'ry shape appear,
The wretched have no more to fear:
But round my heart the ties are bound,
That heart transpierc'd with many a wound;
These bleed afresh, those ties I tear,
To leave the bonie banks of Ayr.

Farewell, old Coila's hills and dales,
Her heathy moors and winding vales;
The scenes where wretched Fancy roves,
Pursuing past, unhappy loves!
Farewell, my friends! farewell, my foes!
My peace with these, my love with those:
The bursting tears my heart declare—
Farewell, the bonie banks of Ayr!

[Our note to the last production forms a necessary prelude to this. Professor Walker, who met Burns at breakfast with Dr. Blacklock, shortly after his arrival in Edinburgh, gives the following interesting account of these verses:—"After breakfast I requested him to communicate some of his unpublished pieces, and he recited his farewell song to the Banks of Ayr, introducing it with a description of the circumstances in which it was composed, more striking than the poem itself. He had left Dr. Lawrie's family, after a visit which he expected to be the last, and, on his way home, had to cross a wide stretch of solitary moor. . . . The aspect of nature harmonized with his feelings. It was a lowering and heavy evening in the end of autumn. The wind was up, and whistled through the rushes and the long spear-grass which bent before it. The clouds were driving across the sky; and cold pelting showers, at intervals, added discomfort of body to cheerlessness of mind. Under these circumstances, and in this frame, Burns composed his poem."]

(The delineation of Burns's feelings as positively shuddering at the prospect of a tempest-tost voyage—which has been suggested to him by his stormy moorland journey—becomes more intensely graphic, when we consider that every landsman who has never yet been to sea, pictures storms and tempests at sea to be even more terrible than they generally are.—J. H.)

LINES ON MEETING WITH LORD DAER.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

THIS *wot* ye all whom it concerns, know
I, Rhymer *Robin*, alias Burns, Robert
October twenty-third,
A ne'er-to-be-forgotten day,
Sae far I *sprachl'd* up the *brae*, scrambled hill
I *dinner'd* wi' a Lord. dined

I've been at *drucken* writers' feasts, drunken
Nay, been bitch-fou* *'mang* godly priests— among
Wi' rev'rence be it spoken!—
I've even join'd the honor'd jorum,
When mighty Squireships of the quorum,
Their hydra *drouth* did *sloken*. thirst / slake

But wi' a Lord!—stand out my *shin*, leg
A Lord—a Peer—an Earl's son!
Up higher yet, my *bonnet!* cap
An' sic a Lord!—*lang Scotch ells twa*, six feet two
Our Peerage he o'erlooks them a',
As I look o'er my sonnet.

But O for Hogarth's magic pow'r!
To show Sir Bardie's *willyart glow'r*, bewildered stare
An' how he star'd an' stammer'd,

* "Fu' as a Fiddler's Bitch" is a common saying in Ayrshire.

When, *goavin*, as if led wi' *branks*, gazing stupidly / bridle
An' stumpin on his ploughman shanks,
He in the parlor hammer'd.

I *sidling* shelter'd in a nook, aside
An' at his Lordship steal't a look,
Like some portentous omen;
Except good sense and social glee,
An' (what surpris'd me) modesty,
I markèd nought uncommon.

I watch'd the symptoms o' the Great,
The *gentle pride*, the lordly state, pride of birth
The arrogant assuming;
The *fient* a pride, nae pride had he, deuce
Nor sauce, nor state, that I could see,
Mair than an honest ploughman.

Then from his Lordship I shall learn,
Henceforth to meet with unconcern
One rank as weel's another;
Nae honest, worthy man need care
To meet with noble youthful Daer,
For he but meets a brother.

[Professor Dugald Stewart communicated these verses to Dr. Currie, with the information that the poet's third line enabled him to give day and date for his first interview with Burns, and at the same time for the poet's first interview with a person of high rank. Dr. Mackenzie of Mauchline was the common friend who brought Burns and the philosopher together on that occasion, and the visit of Lord Daer to Catrine was accidental.

Basil William, Lord Daer, was the son and heir-apparent of the fourth Earl of Selkirk. In 1786, he had just returned from France, where he had mixed with some distinguished men, (particularly Condorcet) who afterwards figured in the Revolution. He contracted very liberal opinions, and made an attempt to get into the British House of Commons as a Scotch member, in the face of one of the provisions in the Articles of Union, which makes

the eldest son of a Scottish Peer ineligible for election. He died, unmarried, in his 32nd year, in 1794, just as the French revolutionary government had merged into a Reign of Terror.

Two days after the interview celebrated in the text, Dr. Mackenzie received a note from Burns, in which he writes—"The foregoing verses were really extempore, but a little corrected since."]

MASONIC SONG.

Tune—"Shawn-boy," or "Over the water to Charlie."

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

YE sons of old *Killie*, assembled by Willie, Kilmarnock
  To follow the noble vocation;
Your thrifty old mother has scarce such another
  To sit in that honorèd station.
I've little to say, but only to pray,
  As praying's the ton of your fashion;
A prayer from the Muse you well may excuse,
  'Tis seldom her favorite passion.

Ye powers who preside o'er the wind and the tide,
  Who markèd each element's border;
Who formed this frame with beneficent aim,
  Whose sovereign statute is order:—
Within this dear mansion, may wayward Contention
  Or witherèd Envy ne'er enter;
May secrecy round be the mystical bound,
  And brotherly Love be the centre!

[The original manuscript of this impromptu, which, in 1834, was possessed by Mr. Gabriel Neil, Glasgow, is now the property of Robert Jardine, Esq., of Castlemilk, Dumfries-shire.

It is said to have been sung or recited by the poet on the occasion of his admission as an honorary member of the Kilwinning St. John's Lodge, No. 22, Kilmarnock, on 26th October 1786. The manuscript was then handed to the Right Worshipful Master, Major William Parker, the "Willie" of the song, whose son, John Parker, Esq., presented it to Mr. Neil.

The poet addressed a letter to his own lodge, St. James's, Tarbolton, from Edinburgh on 23rd August 1787, which concludes with the four closing lines of the text. The Tarbolton Lodge still holds the original letter, which was proudly displayed on 25th January 1877, on the occasion of uncovering the Glasgow statue of the poet.

Burns, in a letter to Robert Muir, in September 1786, enclosed a copy of "The Calf," with the following characteristic compliment to Major Parker:—'If you think it worth while, read it to Charles [Samson, nephew of the renowned "Tam,"] and Mr. W. Parker; they are men whose friendship I shall be proud to claim, both in this world and that which is to come."]

TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

"An honest man's the noblest work of God."—POPE.

When this worthy old sportsman went out, last muirfowl season, he supposed it was to be, in Ossian's phrase, 'the last of his fields,' and expressed an ardent wish to die and be buried in the muirs. On this hint the author composed his elegy and epitaph.—*R. B.*, 1787.

HAS auld Kilmarnock seen the deil?
Or great Mackinlay* *thrawn* his heel? sprained
Or Robertson† again grown *weel*, well
To preach an' read?
"*Na*, *waur* than a'!" cries *ilka chiel*, nay, worse / every fellow
"Tam Samson's dead!"

Kilmarnock lang may grunt an' *graen*, groan
An' sigh, an' *sab*, an' *greet her lane*, sob / weep alone

* A certain preacher, a great favorite with the million. *Vide* 'The Ordination,' stanza ii. (p. 222, vol. I).—*R. B.* The phrase "thrawn his heel" alludes to a scandal or *fama clamosa* regarding Dr. Mackinlay.—J. H.

† Another preacher, an equal favorite with the *few*, who was at that time ailing. For him see also 'The Ordination,' stanza ix.—*R. B.* He was especially unpopular because he read his sermons.—J. H.

An' *cleed* her bairns, man, wife, an' *wean*, clothe / babe
In mourning weed ;
To Death she's dearly pay'd the *kane*—* tribute
Tam Samson's dead !

The Brethren, *o'* the mystic 'level' of
May *hing* their head in woefu' bevel, hang
While by their nose the tears will revel,
Like ony bead ;
Death's *gien* the Lodge an unco *devel*—given blow
Tam Samson's dead !

When Winter muffles up his cloak,
And binds the mire † like a rock ;
When to the *lochs* the curlers flock, lakes
Wi' gleesome speed,
Wha will they station at the 'cock'?—‡
Tam Samson's dead !

He was the king o' a' the *core*, corps
To guard, or draw, or wick a bore,‡
Or up the rink ‡ like Jehu roar,
In time o' need ;
But now he lags on Death's 'hog-score'—‡
Tam Samson's dead !

Now safe the stately *sawmont* sail, salmon
And trouts bedropp'd wi' crimson hail,

---

* Kane is, properly, rent paid in produce.—J. H.

† "Mire" must here be pronounced as having two syllables.

‡ These are all technical terms in the game of Curling. The "cock" called also the "tee" is the point aimed at, and the skip or captain stands there to direct. To "wick a bore" is to cause your stone to come in contact with one that has been played, and so pass through an opening towards the tee. The rink is the course. The hog-score, is a line drawn across the course some yards before the tee. The stones that do not pass it are thrown out as disgraced.—J. H.

And eels, *weel-ken'd* for souple tail, well-known
And *geds* for greed, pikes
Since, dark in Death's 'fish-creel, we wail'
Tam Samson dead!

Rejoice, ye *birring paitricks* a'; whirring partridges
Ye *cootie* muircocks, *crousely* craw; feathery-footed / proudly
Ye *maukins*, cock your *fud fu' braw*, hares / tails full glad
Withouten dread;
Your mortal *fae* is now awa— foe
Tam Samson's dead!

That woefu' morn be ever mourn'd,
Saw him in shootin *graith* adorn'd, equipment
While pointers round impatient burn'd,
Frae couples free'd;
But och! he *gaed* and ne'er return'd! went
Tam Samson's dead!

In vain auld age his body batters,
In vain the gout his ancles fetters,
In vain the *burns* cam down like *waters*, brooks / rivers
An acre *braid!* broad
Now ev'ry auld wife, *greetin*, *clatters* weeping / gossips
"Tam Samson's dead!"

Owre mony a weary *hag* he limpit, morass
An' ay the *tither* shot he thumpit, other
Till coward Death behint him jumpit,
Wi' deadly *feide;* hate
Now he proclaims wi' *tout* o' trumpet, sound
"Tam Samson's dead!"

When at his heart he felt the dagger,
He reel'd his wonted bottle-swagger,

But yet he drew the mortal trigger,
Wi' weel-aim'd heed;
"L—d, five!" he cry'd, an' owre did stagger—
"Tam Samson's dead!"

Ilk hoary hunter mourn'd a brither; each
Ilk sportsman-youth bemoan'd a father;
Yon auld gray stane, amang the heather,
Marks out his head;
Whare Burns has wrote, in rhyming *blether*, non-sense
"Tam Samson's Dead!"

There, low he lies in lasting rest;
Perhaps upon his mould'ring breast
Some spitefu' muirfowl *bigs* her nest builds
To hatch an' breed:
Alas! nae mair he'll them molest!
Tam Samson's dead!*

When August winds the heather wave,
And sportsmen wander by yon grave,
Three volleys let his memory crave,
O' *pouther* an' *lead*, powder shot
Till Echo answer frae her cave,
"Tam Samson's dead!"

Heav'n rest his *saul* whare'er he be! soul
Is th' wish o' *mony mae* than me: many more
He had twa *fauts*, or maybe three, faults
Yet what remead?
Ae social, honest man *want* we: lack
Tam Samson's dead!

---

* This verse was first introduced in the enlarged edition, 1793.

THE EPITAPH.

'Tam Samson's' weel-worn clay here lies,
Ye canting zealots, spare him!
If honest worth in Heaven rise,
Ye'll mend or ye *win* near him. get

PER CONTRA.

Go, Fame, an' canter like a filly
Thro' a' the streets an' *neuks* o' Killie;* nooks
Tell ev'ry social honest *billie* comrade
To cease his grievin;
For, yet *unskaith'd* by Death's unhurt
gleg gullie, sharp knife
Tam Samson's *leevin!* living

[The individuals named in the opening stanza of the above poem, Mackinlay, Robertson, and Tam Samson, were three leading characters in Kilmarnock at the period when Burns thus referred to them. The reader has already been introduced to the former two in "The Ordination;" but "Tam" was nearly as great an original as his christian namesake of Shanter farm in Kirkoswald. He was a nurseryman and seedsman of good credit at the cross of Kilmarnock, a zealous sportsman, a keen mason, an enthusiastic curler, and as good a fellow as ever sat at a social board.

It is a curious fact (first commented on by Mr. Archibald M'Kay in his History of Kilmarnock, 1858), that Samson, who died in 1795, Robertson, who died in 1798, and Mackinlay, who survived to 1841, all occupy one spot in the Laigh Kirkyard, as they do one stanza in the present poem—the dust of the two clergymen being separated from the "weel-worn clay" of the sportsman by only a few inches of ground. Tam's grave is marked by a handsome stone, on which the "epitaph" in the text is engraved. Mackinlay's tablet records that Elizabeth Dickie, his spouse (of whose courtship by "Simper James" mysterious tales have been told), died in 1828, and that "eight of their children who died in infancy lie here, awaiting with their parents the morning of the

* Killie is a phrase the country folks sometimes use for the name of a certain town in the west.—*R. B.* Kilmarnock.

resurrection." A surviving son, the Rev. James Mackinlay, died in Edinburgh, June 19th, 1876.

We are not disposed to credit the newspaper story, dating about 1850, that Tam Samson was such a dolt as to be displeased to have his elegy and epitaph written, even by Burns, while he was yet "in the body:" and that not until the poet added the "PER CONTRA," was he reconciled to the performance.

We must, however, point out that a certain comfortable little "Public," consisting of two storeys, owned by one Sandy Patrick, called "The Bowling-green House," in Back Street (long ago removed), was the favorite "*howff*" of Burns in Kilmarnock. Sandy was married to Tam Samson's daughter, and his house was famous for the quality of its liquors, especially a home-brewed ale, that was generally drunk from wooden caups, and therefore termed "Caup Ale." It is understood that the first reading of our text was delivered in Sandy Patrick's house, to a choice gathering of the poet's Kilmarnock associates, Muir, Parker, Gowdie, &c., — including, of course, the hero of the piece. house of call

On 18th November 1786, Burns enclosed "Tam Samson, as I intend to print him," to his friend Robert Muir, while he was preparing for his Edinburgh expedition.]

EPISTLE TO MAJOR LOGAN.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

HAIL, *thairm*-inspirin, rattlin, Willie! fiddle-string
Tho' fortune's road be rough an' hilly
To every fiddling, rhyming *billie*, brother
We never heed,
But take it like the unback'd filly,
Proud o' her speed.

When, idly *goavin*, *whyles* we saunter; staring around / sometimes
Yirr! fancy barks, awa we canter,
Up hill, down brae, till some *mishanter*, mischance
Some black bog-hole,
Arrests us, then the *scathe* an' banter hurt
We're forced to *thole*. endure

Hale be your heart! hale be your fiddle! whole
Lang may your *elbuck jink and diddle*, elbow move merrily
To cheer you through the weary *widdle* struggle
O' this wide *warl'*. world
Until you on a *crummock driddle*, staff totter
A grey hair'd *carl.** patriarch

Come wealth, come *poortith*, late or soon, poverty
Heaven send your heart-strings ay in tune,
And screw your temper-pins *aboon*— above
A fifth or *mair*— more
The melancholious, lazy *croon* grumbling note
O' *cankrie* care. cankering

May still your life from day to day,
Nae "lente largo" in the play,
But "allegretto forte" gay,
Harmonious flow,
A sweeping, kindling, *bauld* strathspey—† bold
Encore! Bravo!

A blessing on the cheery *gang* class
Wha dearly like a jig or sang,
An' never think o' right an' wrang
By square an' rule,
But, as the *clegs* o' feeling *stang*, gadflies sting
Are wise or fool.

My *hand-waled* curse keep hard in chase hand-picked
The harpy, *hoodock*, purse-proud race, miserly
Wha count on *poortith* as disgrace; poverty
Their tuneless hearts,
May fireside discords jar a base
To a' their parts!

---

* The reader will notice that this verse is almost identical with stanza second of the epistle to Sillar, p. 138, vol. I.

† See Note p. 11, *supra*.

But come, your hand, my careless *brither*, brother
I' th' *ither warl'*, if there's anither, other world
An' that there is, I've little *swither* doubt
About the matter;
We, *cheek for chow*, shall jog thegither, cheek by jole
I'se ne'er *bid* better.* I will wish for

We've faults and failings—granted clearly,
We're frail backsliding mortals merely,
Eve's bonie squad, priests *wyte* them *sheerly* blame directly
For our grand fa';
But still, but still, I like them dearly—
God bless them a'!

Ochon for poor Castalian drinkers,
When they fa' foul o' earthly *jinkers!* tempting women
The witching, curs'd, delicious *blinkers* love-glancers
Hae put me *hyte*, crazy
And *gart* me *weet* my *waukrife winkers*, made wet sleepless eyes
Wi' *girnin* spite. vengeful

But by yon moon!—and that's high swearin—
An' every star within my hearin!
An' by her een wha was a dear ane
I'll ne'er forget!
I hope to gie the jads a clearin,
In fair play yet.†

My loss I mourn, but not repent it;
I'll seek my pursie *whare* I *tint* it; where lost

---

* This stanza gives us an interesting peep into Burns's mental condition so far as revealed religion was concerned. He was not quite an agnostic, neither was he a firm believer. Probably in this, as in other matters, he was a man of moods and impulses.—J. H.

† I hope to give the jades a settlement in full or a *quid pro quo*.—J. H.

Ance to the Indies I were *wonted*, conveyed
Some *cantraip* hour, witching
By some sweet elf I'll yet be *dinted;* fondled
Then *vive l'amour!*

Faites mes baissemains respectueusè,
To sentimental sister Susie,
And honest *Lucky;* no to *roose* you, goodwife / overpraise
Ye may be proud,
That sic a couple fate allows ye,
To grace your blood.

Nae mair at present can I measure,
An' *trowth* my rhymin ware's nae treasure; in truth
But when in Ayr, some half-hour's leisure,
Be't light, be't dark,
Sir Bard will do himself the pleasure
To call at Park.

ROBERT BURNS.

MOSSGIEL, 30*th October* 1786.

[The manuscript of this interesting poem was, in 1834, the property of Mr. David Auld, of Doonbrae, who supplied Cunningham with a copy for his edition of the poet's works.

Major William Logan was a retired military officer who lived a bachelor life with his mother and a maiden sister, at his villa of Park, near Ayr. He was a provincial wit, and many samples of his ready repartee, of less or more authenticity, still float about Ayr.

The reader has now been led down to the close of October, and the bard still harps about the West Indies; neither has he forgotten the glamour of Jean Armour's eyes; he "mourns the loss" of her, but does "not repent it."

What about "Highland Mary" all this time, since "the second Sunday of May?" Alas! it is an assured fact that on some day during the currency of this month of October 1786, all that was mortal of poor Mary was laid under the turf, in the West Kirkyard of Greenock. In most editions of the poet's works, from Cromek's time downwards, a beautiful little poem called "A Prayer for Mary," is to be found. We have excluded it from what would have been its proper place in our first volume, because it is now

ascertained that the verses were not composed by Burns, but by some unknown bard, and published in an old Magazine while our author was yet a youth. In 1786, Burns transcribed that old poem in a fair hand, changing the name in the original from "Serina" to *My Mary*, and tenderly applying its words and sentiments to the relationship then subsisting between Mary and himself. In that adapted form it is more than probable that it was placed in Mary's hand when they parted on that memorable Sunday evening.

With exception of the change above pointed out, the poem may be found in the Edinburgh Magazine of 1774, where it is given as a translation from Euripides.

In 1795, Burns forwarded it as a "Song" to Johnson, instructing him to print it as additional words to the air of "Wherefore sighing art thou, Phillis?" The following are the words—with Burns's alteration—of this poem, of which the authorship has been so long misrepresented:

Powers celestial! whose protection
  Ever guards the virtuous fair,
While in distant lands I wander,
  Let my Mary be your care:
Let her form so fair and faultless—
  Fair and faultless as your own,
Let my Mary's kindred spirit
  Draw your choicest influence down!

Make the gales you waft around her
  Soft and peaceful as her breast;
Breathing in the breeze that fans her,
  Soothe her bosom into rest:
Guardian angels! O protect her
  When in distant lands I roam;
To realms unknown while fate exiles me,
  Make her bosom still my home!]

FRAGMENT ON SENSIBILITY.

(BLACKIE'S "LAND OF BURNS," 1840.)

RUSTICITY'S ungainly form
  May cloud the highest mind;
But when the heart is nobly warm,
  The good excuse will find.

Propriety's cold, cautious rules
  Warm fervor may o'erlook;
But spare poor sensibility
  Th' ungentle, harsh rebuke.

[A letter by Burns addressed to Mr. Archibald Lawrie, son of the pastor of Loudon, dated "Mossgiel, 13th November 1786," refers to Ossian's Poems and a volume of Songs, sent along with the letter, in fulfilment of the poet's promise to lend these to the inmates of the manse. When the book of songs was opened, the foregoing lines on a slip of paper in the bard's holograph were found enclosed. Mrs. Lawrie regarded the lines as a delicate excuse for him, if not a gentle rebuke to herself, in reference to a rather warm argument they had been engaged in, during the poet's last visit to St. Margaret's Hill, about the unfortunate result of Miss Peggy Kennedy's intimacy with M'Dowall of Logan. The story of that unpleasant transaction had excited a great sensation in Ayrshire, and Mrs. Lawrie, disliking the subject as unsuitable for her family circle, put a peremptory stop to its discussion. The poet seemed somewhat ruffled by Mrs. Lawrie's firmness, and the text displays his method of taking revenge.

The reader will find some reference to the story of this love-mishap at page 139, vol. first, in our note to the song—"Young Peggy blooms our boniest lass."]

(That the unhappy history of Miss Peggy Kennedy had made a deep and lasting impression on Burns is evidenced by the fact that it forms the subject of one of his most exquisite songs—"Ye Banks and Braes o' bonie Doon"—composed in 1791, years after the sad event.—J. H.)

A WINTER NIGHT.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

"Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
  That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm!
  How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,
  Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
  From seasons such as these?"—SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN biting Boreas, *fell* and *dour*, keen stern
Sharp shivers thro' the leafless bow'r;

A Winters Night.

"I THOUGHT ME ON THE GURIE CATTLE

When Phœbus *gies* a short-liv'd *glow'r*, gives stare
Far south the *lift*, sky
Dim-dark'ning thro' the flaky show'r,
Or whirling *drift*: blown snow

Ae night the storm the steeples rockèd,
Poor Labor sweet in sleep was lockèd,
While *burns*, wi' snawy wreaths up-chokèd, streamlets
Wild-eddying swirl;
Or thro' the mining outlet *bockèd*, burst gurgling
Down headlong hurl:

List'ning the doors an' *winnocks* rattle, windows
I thought me on the *ourie* cattle, outlying
Or *silly* sheep, wha *bide* this *brattle* helpless bear / outburst
O' winter war,
And thro' the drift, deep-*lairing*, *sprattle* sinking / scramble
Beneath a *scaur*. bluff

Ilk happing bird,—wee, helpless thing! each hopping
That, in the merry months *o'* spring, of
Delighted me to hear thee sing,
What comes o' thee?
Whare wilt thou cow'r thy *chittering* wing, shivering
An' close thy e'e?

Ev'n you, on murdering errands toil'd,
Lone from your savage homes exil'd,
The blood-stain'd roost, and sheep-cote spoil'd,
My heart forgets,
While pitiless the tempest wild
Sore on you beats! *

* One is not surprised to see the bard who sung of "The Mouse," "The Daisy" and "The Wounded Hare" sympathizing with his fellow-choristers of nature at this bleak season; but his real tenderness of heart displays itself in his thoughtful pity even for the wily, murderous fox. It is in fine keeping with his being "wae to think upon yon den ev'n for your sake," and his affectionate remonstrance with Satan and appeal to him "To take a thought and men'."—J. H.

Now Phœbe, in her midnight reign,
Dark-muffl'd, view'd the dreary plain;
Still crowding thoughts, a pensive train,
Rose in my soul,
When on my ear this plaintive strain,
Slow, solemn, stole—

"Blow, blow, ye winds, with heavier gust!
And freeze, thou bitter-biting frost!
Descend, ye chilly, smothering snows!
Not all your rage, as now united, shows
More hard unkindness unrelenting,
Vengeful malice, unrepenting,
Than heaven-illumin'd Man on brother Man bestows!

"See stern Oppression's iron grip,
Or mad Ambition's gory hand,
Sending, like blood-hounds from the slip,
Woe, Want, and Murder o'er a land!
Ev'n in the peaceful rural vale,
Truth, weeping, tells the mournful tale,
How pamper'd Luxury, Flatt'ry by her side,
The parasite empoisoning her ear,
With all the servile wretches in the rear,
Looks o'er proud Property, extended wide;
And eyes the simple, rustic hind,
Whose toil upholds the glitt'ring show—
A creature of another kind,
Some coarser substance, unrefin'd—
Plac'd for her lordly use, thus far, thus vile, below!

"Where, where is Love's fond, tender throe,
With lordly Honor's lofty brow,
The pow'rs you proudly own?
Is there, beneath Love's noble name,
Can harbor, dark, the selfish aim,
To bless himself alone!

Mark maiden-innocence a prey
To love-pretending snares:
This boasted Honor turns away,
Shunning soft Pity's rising sway,
Regardless of the tears and unavailing pray'rs!
Perhaps this hour, in Misery's squalid nest,
She strains your infant to her joyless breast,
And with a mother's fears shrinks at the rocking blast!

"Oh ye! who, sunk in beds of down,
Feel not a want but what yourselves create,
Think, for a moment, on his wretched fate,
Whom friends and fortune quite disown!
Ill-satisfy'd keen nature's clamorous call,
Stretch'd on his straw, he lays himself to sleep;
While thro' the ragged roof and chinky wall,
Chill, o'er his slumbers, piles the drifty heap!
Think on the dungeon's grim confine,
Where Guilt and poor Misfortune pine!
Guilt, erring man, relenting view,
But shall thy legal rage pursue
The wretch, already crushèd low
By cruel Fortune's undeservèd blow?
Affliction's sons are brothers in distress;
A brother to relieve, how exquisite the bliss!"

I heard nae mair, for Chanticleer
Shook off the pouthery snaw,
And hail'd the morning with a cheer,
A cottage-rousing *craw*. crow

But deep this truth impress'd my mind—
Thro' all His works abroad,
The heart benevolent and kind
The most resembles God.

[The Poet, in a letter to Mr. John Ballantine of Ayr, dated from Mossgiel on 20th Nov. 1786, (exactly a week before he set out for

Edinburgh) enclosed the foregoing piece, as his "first attempt in that irregular kind of measure in which many of our finest odes are written."

Dr. Currie remarks of this poem that it is "highly characteristic both of the temper of mind, and of the condition of Burns. It begins with a description of a dreadful storm on a night in winter: the poet represents himself as lying in bed, and listening to its howling. In this situation he naturally turns his thoughts to the 'ourie cattle,' and the 'silly sheep,' exposed to all the violence of the tempest. After sympathizing with the birds, and even beasts of prey, crowding thoughts pensively rise in his soul, as the moon, 'dark-muffled,' casts a dreary light on his window. In this state he hears a voice complaining in language and sentiment somewhat akin to that of his own early dirge, 'Man was made to mourn.'"

Currie's criticism is that "the strain of sentiment which runs through the poem is noble, but the execution is unequal, and the versification defective."

Coleridge pays Burns the compliment of imitating the concluding verses, in the moral application which closes his *Ancient Mariner:*—"He prayeth best who loveth best both man and bird and beast."]

(The lines beginning "Blow, blow," &c., are simply a paraphrase-amplification of the song on *Man's Ingratitude,* in "As You Like It;" but Burns does not suffer when brought in competition even with Shakespere.

"This poem," says Thomas Carlyle, "is worth seven homilies on mercy, for it is the voice of Mercy herself. Burns, indeed, lives in sympathy: his soul rushes forth into all the realms of being: nothing that has existence can be indifferent to him."—J. H.)

SONG—YON WILD MOSSY MOUNTAINS.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1792.)

YON wild mossy mountains sae lofty and wide,
That nurse in their bosom the youth o' the Clyde,*

* The Clyde rises in that part of the mountain chain called the Southern Highlands, which separates Lanark and Peebles from Dumfries-shire, and known as the Moffat hills. It flows northwest past Lanark and Glasgow, and is the greatest commercial stream in Scotland. Although thus commercially important, in America it would not be recognized as more than a creek.—J. H.

Where the grouse lead their coveys thro' the heather
to feed,
And the shepherd *tents* his flock as he pipes watches
on his reed.*

Not Gowrie's rich valley,† nor Forth's‡ sunny shores,
To me hae the charms o' yon wild, mossy moors;
For there, by a lanely, sequesterèd stream,
Resides a sweet lassie, my thought and my dream.

Amang thae wild mountains shall still be my path,
Ilk stream foaming down its ain green, narrow each
strath; vale
For there, wi' my lassie, the day-lang I rove,
While o'er us unheeded flie the swift hours o' love.

She is not the fairest, altho' she is fair;
O' nice education but sma' is her share;
Her parentage humble as humble can be;
But I *lo'e* the dear lassie because she lo'es me. love

To Beauty what man but *maun* yield him a prize, must
In her armor of glances, and blushes, and sighs?
And when wit and refinement hae polish'd her darts,
They dazzle our een, as they flie to our hearts.

But kindness, sweet kindness, in the fond-sparkling e'e,
Has lustre outshining the diamond to me;
And the heart beating love as I'm clasp'd in her arms,
O, these are my lassie's all-conquering charms!

---

* This is purely a poet's fancy-sketch. Scotch shepherds do not, and, I apprehend, never did pipe on reeds. Reeds fit for pipes are not grown among the spurs of the Lowthers.—J. H.

† Carse, or bottom lands of Gowrie along the Tay, in Perthshire and Fife, said to be the richest in Scotland.—J. H.

‡ The river and estuary on which Stirling and Edinburgh stand. The Carse of Stirling, consisting of the bottom lands along the "links of Forth" in Stirling and Clackmannanshires is also very fertile.—J. H.

[The bard's remark on this production in his Glenriddell notes is the following—"This song alludes to a part of my private history which it is of no consequence to the world to know." The "world," however, is not to be put off in this way; a remark of that kind from Burns only stimulates curiosity. Stenhouse suggested "Highland Mary" as its theme; and Cunningham, associating "moors and mosses many" with the idea of the poet's "Nannie," proposed to assign the heroineship to her.

As Burns admitted in one of his letters to George Thomson, that all his earlier love-songs were the breathings of real passion, bearing a legend of the heart faithfully inscribed on each, it is but reasonable that some interest should attach to the above simple effusion. The poet was evidently partial to it himself; for after publishing it in the *Museum* to a mediocre melody of Oswald's, he recommended it to Thomson, in July 1793, as suitable words for the air, "There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame."

[We think the following facts throw light on the origin of this song:—Burns left Mossgiel for Edinburgh on 27th November 1786, travelling on horseback by way of Muirkirk. He passed the night and a portion of the following day with Mr. Archibald Prentice, farmer, Covington, near Biggar, and arrived in Edinburgh in the afternoon of Tuesday the 28th. This honest farmer, Father of Mr. Archibald Prentice, Editor of the Manchester *Times*, was such an enthusiastic admirer of Burns, that he subscribed for twenty copies of the author's Edinburgh edition. He kept a diary, from which it appears that Burns paid him a visit from Edinburgh on Tuesday the first of May 1787. Regarding this latter circumstance Chambers in 1856 observed, that it was one of several excursions of Burns, never before noticed by any biographer; and these have generally "some obscurity, if not mystery resting upon them." He also suggested that this secret visit to Lanarkshire may have had some connection with the present song, in which a humble peasant-girl of Clydesdale bears a part in the poet's "private history which it is of no consequence to the world to know." On the first visit we infer that Burns first saw the "sweet lassie of his thought and his dream," and his second mysterious visit was to see her again. The entry in Mr. Prentice's diary is as follows: "[1787] May 1. Cold. Making bear land. Mr. Burns here."

The diary came into possession of Mr. John Prentice, another son of Burns's friend, in whose hands Mr. Chambers saw it.—J. H.]

ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

EDINA! Scotia's darling seat!
All hail thy palaces and tow'rs,
Where once, beneath a Monarch's feet,
Sat Legislation's sovereign pow'rs:
From marking wildly-scatt'red flowr's,
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing, lone, the lingering hours,
I shelter in thy honor'd shade.

Here Wealth still swells the golden tide,
As busy Trade his labor plies;
There Architecture's noble pride
Bids elegance and splendor rise:
Here Justice, from her native skies,
High wields her balance and her rod;
There Learning, with his eagle eyes,
Seeks Science in her coy abode.

Thy sons, Edina, social, kind,
With open arms the stranger hail;
Their views enlarg'd, their liberal mind,
Above the narrow, rural[1] vale:
Attentive still to Sorrow's wail,
Or modest Merit's silent claim;
And never may their sources fail!
And never Envy blot their name!

Thy daughters bright thy walks adorn,
Gay as the gilded summer sky,
Sweet as the dewy, milk-white thorn,
Dear as the raptur'd thrill of joy!

Fair Burnet strikes th' adoring eye,
  Heaven's beauties on my fancy shine;
I see the Sire of Love on high,
  And own His work indeed divine!

There, watching high the least alarms,
  Thy rough, rude fortress gleams afar;
Like some bold veteran, grey in arms,
  And mark'd with many a seamy scar:
The pond'rous wall and massy bar,
  Grim rising o'er the rugged rock,
Have oft withstood[2] assailing war,
  And oft repell'd th' invader's shock.

With awe-struck thought, and pitying tears,
  I view that noble, stately Dome,*
Where Scotia's kings of other years,
  Fam'd heroes! had their royal home:
Alas, how chang'd the times to come!
  Their royal name low in the dust!
Their hapless race wild-wand'ring roam!
  Tho' rigid Law[3] cries out, "'twas just!"

Wild beats my heart[4] to trace your steps,
  Whose ancestors, in days of yore,
Thro' hostile ranks and ruin'd gaps
  Old Scotia's bloody lion bore:†
Ev'n I who sing in rustic lore,
  Haply my sires have left their shed,
And fac'd grim Danger's loudest roar,
  Bold-following where your fathers led!

Edina! Scotia's darling seat! Edinburgh
  All hail thy palaces and tow'rs;
Where once, beneath a Monarch's feet,
  Sat Legislation's sovereign pow'rs:

---

* Holyrood.

† A ruddy lion rampant is the standard of Scotland.—J. H.

From marking wildly scatt'red flow'rs,
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing, lone, the lingering hours,
I shelter in thy honor'd shade.

[The above address was undoubtedly one of the earliest efforts of the author's musings after his arrival in the city. Before he had resided one month there, he enclosed a copy of it, along with another piece unnamed, to Mr. W. Chalmers, writer in Ayr. Concerning these productions he wrote thus:—"I enclose you two poems which I have carded and spun since I passed Glenbuck.* One blank in the address to Edinburgh, 'Fair B——,' is heavenly Miss Burnet, daughter of Lord Monboddo, at whose house I have had the honor to be more than once."

About the same date, Mrs. Alison Cockburn, authoress of the popular song "I've seen the smiling of Fortune beguiling," then a very aged lady, thus wrote to a friend regarding the distinguished poetic visitant:—"The town is at present all agog with the 'Ploughman Poet,' who receives adulation with native dignity, and is the very figure of his profession, strong, but coarse; yet he has a most enthusiastic heart of love. He has seen Duchess Gordon and all the gay world. His favorite, for looks and manners, is Bess Burnet—no bad judge indeed." Mr. Robert Clarke of Cincinnati, Ohio, is the possessor of a holograph MS. of this poem, which shews the following variations:—

[1] rustic. [2] oft has it stood. [3] Truth. [4] My heart beats wild.]

ADDRESS TO A HAGGIS.†

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

FAIR fa' your honest, *sonsie* face, — blessings on / plump
Great chieftain o' the pudding-race!
Aboon them a' ye tak your place, — above
Painch, tripe, or *thairm*: — paunch / small gut
Weel are ye *wordy* o' a grace — worthy
As lang's my arm.

* Glenbuck is a high hill which bounds the horizon on the northeast from Mauchline and Mossgiel.—J. H.

† The haggis, though said to be of French extraction, is a culinary production now peculiar to Scotland. It is composed of minced offal of mutton, mixed with oatmeal and suet, and boiled in a sheep's stomach.—J. H.

The groaning trencher there ye fill,
Your *hurdies* like a distant hill, rear
Your pin * *wad* help to mend a mill would
In time o' need,
While thro' your pores the dews distil
Like amber bead.

His knife see rustic Labor *dight*, wipe
An' cut you up wi' ready sleight,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright,
Like ony ditch;
And then, O what a glorious sight,
Warm-*reekin*, rich! smoking

Then, horn for horn,† they stretch an' strive:
Deil *tak* the hindmost! on they drive, take
Till a' their *weel-swall'd kytes belyve* full stomachs / shortly
Are bent like drums;
Then auld Guidman, maist like to *rive*, burst
'*Bethanket!*' hums. grace after meat

Is there that owre his French ragout,
Or olio that *wad staw* a sow, would disgust
Or fricassee wad mak her *spew* vomit
Wi' perfect *scunner*, loathing
Looks down wi' sneering, scornfu' view
On *sic* a dinner? such

Poor devil! see him owre his trash,
As *feckless* as a withered *rash*, feeble rush
His spindle *shank*, a *guid* whip-lash, leg good
His *nieve* a *nit;* fist nut
Thro' *bluidy* flood or field to dash, bloody
O how unfit!

---

* Wooden pin used to fix the opening in the haggis-bag.

† In the time of Burns haggis, and other spoon-food, was supped with horn spoons.

But mark the Rustic, haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread,
Clap in his *walie* nieve a blade, powerful
He'll mak it whissle;
An' legs, an' arms, an' heads will *sned*, shear off
Like *taps o' thrissle.* thistle-tops

Ye Pow'rs wha mak mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill o' fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae *skinking* ware watery
That *jaups* in *luggies;* splashes / eared bowls
But, if ye wish her gratefu' prayer
Gie her a Haggis! give

[In all likelihood this was the other poem referred to in the poet's letter to Chalmers, quoted in the preceding note. It appeared in print in the columns of the Caledonian Mercury, on 20th December, 1786, and again in the Poet's corner of the Scots Magazine for January, 1787. James Hogg assures his readers that the poem was produced, almost impromptu, at a dinner within the house of Mr. Andrew Bruce, merchant, Castle hill. It is executed much in the spirit and style of the author's Postscript to his "Earnest cry and Prayer."

In preparing this poem for publication in his new edition, he substituted a fresh verse for the following stanza which closes the copy that he had sent to the newspaper:—

Ye Powers wha gie us a' that's gude,
Still bless auld Caledonia's brood
Wi' great John Barleycorn's heart's *blude* blood
In *stoups* and *luggies;* flagons eared dishes
And on our board that King o' food,
A glorious Haggis!

Chambers, apparently on some reliable authority, tells us that this last verse was an impromptu Grace uttered by the poet at a friend's house, where it was so well received that he was induced to extend the subject into the above "Address." We have been informed by a descendant of Mr. Morison, cabinetmaker in Mauchline, that such an incident did occur on one occasion, when a haggis formed part of a Sunday meal in his ancestor's house; the poet having dropped in to take pot-luck, as he sometimes did, after forenoon service in Mauchline kirk.]

TO MISS LOGAN,

WITH BEATTIE'S POEMS FOR A NEW-YEAR'S GIFT, JAN. 1, 1787.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

AGAIN the silent wheels of time
  Their annual round have driven,
And you, tho' scarce in maiden prime,
  Are so much nearer Heaven.

No gifts have I from Indian coasts
  The infant year to hail;
I send you more than India boasts,
  In Edwin's simple tale.

Our sex with guile, and faithless love,
  Is charg'd, perhaps too true;
But may, dear maid, each lover prove
  An Edwin still to you.

[This elegant inscription was addressed to the "sentimental sister Susie," referred to in the author's "Epistle to Major Logan," vol. ii. p. 45. The reader will bear in mind that, at the date of that epistle (30th Oct. 1786), the Poet had still the prospect of emigrating to the West Indies. The lapse of two short months, however, seemed to convert such a recollection into a dream. In the line, "No gifts have I from India's coasts," he seems to revert to some topics discussed at the Major's fireside, involving a promise on his part to send Miss Susie a token of remembrance from that torrid zone to which he then seemed fated.

In Dec. 1825, a paragraph in the *Dumfries Courier* announced the narrow escape from drowning of J. Thomson, Esq., and his wife, formerly Miss Logan, the heroine of these verses, in travelling home on a stormy night.]

MR. WILLIAM SMELLIE—A SKETCH.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

SHREWD Willie Smellie to Crochallan * came;
The old cock'd hat, the grey surtout, the same;
His bristling beard just rising in its might,
'Twas four long nights and days to shaving night;
His uncomb'd grizzly locks, wild staring, thatch'd
A head for thought profound and clear, unmatch'd;
Yet tho' his caustic wit was biting-rude,
His heart was warm, benevolent, and good.

[This distinguished citizen of Edinburgh was born there in 1740, so that his age would be 47 when Burns extemporised the above sketch of his portrait. "There in my eye," wrote the bard, at a somewhat later period, "is our friend Smellie, a man positively of the first abilities and greatest strength of mind, as well as one of the best hearts and keenest wits that I have ever met with."

Lord Monboddo used to address him as "my learned printer," for besides having planned and edited the "Encyclopædia Britannica" in 1771, he was the translator of Buffon, and author of several original works of established reputation, such as "The Philosophy of Natural History." His printing office was situated at the foot of Anchor Close, the site of which is now occupied as the printing and publishing premises of the *Scotsman* newspaper. Smellie was printer of the first Edinburgh edition of Burns's Poems, and the acquaintanceship thus begun, speedily ripened into a close intimacy and companionship. A little farther up the close referred to, which was entered from the High Street, below the Cross on the north side, was a famous Tavern kept by a genial old Highlandman, named Daunie (*i. e.* Daniel) Douglas. Its proximity to the Cross and the Parliament House, made this tavern a very convenient house of call, especially to those who transacted business with the learned typographer; and there, a few years before Burns came to Edinburgh, a Club had been formed by some of its distinguished frequenters. Foremost among these was Charles Hay, Advocate, afterwards Lord Newton, celebrated for his forensic and judicial talents; and now remembered chiefly

* See note to next piece.

for his social eccentricities and extraordinary feats of claret-drinking. Smellie introduced Burns to this Club in January 1787. It bore the name of "the Crochallan Fencibles," and all its members held some pretended military rank or title; but the fencing exercises in which the corps was drilled, were those of raillery and wit only. At the introduction of new members, it was the practice to treat such novices with much apparent rudeness, as a trial of their tempers and humors. Burns underwent a severe castigation at the hands of the "Hangman" (Mr. Smellie), and the "Muster-master General" to the corps (Lord Newton); but as the poet had been let into the secret beforehand, he shewed himself "equal to the occasion."

Mr. Wm. Smellie, besides being a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, was Secretary to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. He pre-deceased our poet by upwards of one year, his death occurring on 24th June, 1795.]

RATTLIN, ROARIN WILLIE.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

As I cam by Crochallan,
  I cannilie keeket ben;*
Rattlin, roarin Willie
  Was sittin at yon *boord-en'*; head of the table

Sittin at yon boord-en',
  And amang gude companie;
Rattlin, roaring Willie,
  You're welcome hame to me!

[This "last stanza," appended to an ancient ditty bearing the title prefixed, Burns tells us he "composed out of compliment to one of the worthiest fellows in the world, William Dunbar, Esq., W.S., Edinburgh, and Colonel of the Crochallan corps, a Club of wits who took that title at the time of raising the fencible regiments." The connecting words of the old song are these:—

O rattlin, roarin Willie, O he held to the fair,
An' for to sell his fiddle, an' buy some other ware;
But parting wi' his fiddle, the saut tear blint his ee;
And rattlin, roarin Willie, you're welcome hame to me!

* Slyly peeped into the spence or inner room.—J. H.

O Willie, come sell your fiddle, O sell your fiddle sae fine;
O Willie, come sell your fiddle, an' buy a pint o' wine:
If I should sell my fiddle, the warl would think I was mad;
For mony a rantin day my fiddle an' I hae had.

Mr. Dunbar was enthusiastically fond of old songs and ballads; and that these entered largely into the social enjoyments of the Crochallan club is proved by the fact that it took its title from a Highland song called "Chro Chalein" (Gaelic for *Colin's cattle*,) which the landlord of their place of meeting (Dainie Douglas) sang with great effect. Alexander Cunningham, writer, latterly a jeweller in Edinburgh, and Robert Cleghorn of Saughton Mills, near Edinburgh—both of whom were lifelong correspondents of the bard—were also members of the social corps, and both were eminently good singers. Burns took the pains to form a MS. collection of old-fashioned and highly spiced Scotch songs, expressly for the use of the Crochallan Club. In Dumfries, he carefully kept the book under lock and key; but some years after his death, it fell into the hands of a person who caused it to be printed in a very coarse style, and privately circulated, under the title of "The Merry Muse of Caledonia," post 8vo, pp. 128. The poet's name, however, is not on the title page, nor indicated in any way except by the unmistakable power exhibited in some of the pieces.

Wm. Dunbar, W.S., latterly held the post of joint Inspector-General of Stamp duties for Scotland. He died on the 18th February 1807.]

(We refrain from recognizing any of the pieces in the above publication for three reasons—First, their character: Second, their want of authentication: the great bulk of the pieces were not by Burns originally, and even such as were partially or wholly his have been retouched and rendered grosser by other hands, and there are no means of discriminating between what is genuine and what is not. Third, Burns never designed their publication. They were collected for a roistering club, to be sung in their hours of wildest revelry, and that in an age of not over-refinement. To reproduce such pieces in a work dedicated to the genius of Scotland's bard would be sacrilege.—J. H.)

SONG.—BONIE DUNDEE.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1787.)

My blessins upon thy sweet wee lippie!
My blessins upon thy bonie *e'e-brie!* eye-brow
Thy smiles are sae like my blythe sodger laddie,
Thou's ay the dearer, and dearer to me!

But I'll *big* a bow'r on yon bonie banks, build
Whare Tay rins *wimplin* by sae clear; winding
An' I'll *cleed* thee in the tartan sae fine, clothe
And mak thee a man like thy daddie dear.

[There is preserved, in the poet's monument at Edinburgh, the original letter, dated 1st Feb. 1787, which was sent by the Earl of Buchan to Burns, tendering gratuitous advice, which, the Bard's reply, printed in the Correspondence, shews he scarcely required. On the back of that letter is a pencil jotting, in the poet's hand, giving the opening lines of the old song, apparently noted down from the singing of Cleghorn, referred to in the preceding article. For the sake of the connection we here set them down:—

"O whar gat ye that *happer-meal* bannock? oat-meal
Silly auld bodie, O dinna ye see;
I gat it frae a young, brisk sodger laddie,
Atween *Saint Johnstoun* an' bonie Dundee. Perth

O gin I saw the laddie that gae me't!
Aft has he *doudl't* me up on his knee; dandled
May Heaven protect my bonie Scots laddie,
An' send him safe hame to his babie and me!"

Stenhouse, in his illustrations to Johnson's Museum, informs us that Burns sent a copy of his improved version of the song to his friend Cleghorn, with the following laconic epistle annexed:—

*"Dear Cleghorn, you will see by the above that I have added a stanza to 'Bonie Dundee.' If you think it will do, you may set it agoing

—Upon a ten string'd instrument,
And on the psaltery.

To Mr. Cleghorn, *Farmer.*—God bless the trade!—*R. B.*"]

---

* The original of the letter is now in the possession of Mr. J. Raymond Claghorn, Philadelphia.

EXTEMPORE IN THE COURT OF SESSION.

Tune—"Killiecrankie."

(CROMEK, 1808.)

LORD ADVOCATE.

HE clench'd his pamphlets in his fist,
  He quoted and he hinted,
Till, in a declamation-mist,
  His argument he *tint* it : lost
He gapèd for't, he grapèd for't,
  He fand it was awa, man ;
But what his common sense came short,
  He ekèd out wi' law, man.

MR. ERSKINE.

Collected, Harry stood *awee*, short time
  Then open'd out his arm, man ;
His lordship sat wi' ruefu' e'e,
  And ey'd the gathering storm, man :
Like wind-driv'n hail it did assail,
  Or torrents owre a *lin*, man ; waterfall
The BENCH sae wise lift up their eyes,
  Half-*wauken'd* wi' the *din*, man. awakened noise

[The proceedings in the supreme civil court are always interesting to intelligent strangers who visit the capital of Scotland. That Burns took occasional opportunities of listening to the debates and addresses of distinguished pleaders may well be credited. A letter of his to Gavin Hamilton, dated 8th March 1787, narrates that he had been watching the progress and issue of a famous *crim-con* case which had been discussed and disposed of on the preceding day, and of which the reader will hear again when, in proper course, we give some verses composed by our poet on the subject.

The above lively portraitures of two leading barristers of that day, the one representing Mr. Ilay Campbell, Lord Advocate, (afterwards Lord President), and the other, Harry Erskine, Dean of Faculty, preserve some results of the poet's visits to the Parliament House.]

INSCRIPTION FOR THE HEADSTONE OF FERGUSSON THE POET.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

No sculptured marble here, nor pompous lay,
'No storied urn nor animated bust;'
This simple stone directs pale Scotia's way,
To pour her sorrows o'er the Poet's dust.

ADDITIONAL STANZAS.

(FROM ALEXANDER SMITH'S ED., 1865.)

She mourns, sweet tuneful youth, thy hapless fate;
Tho' all the powers of song thy fancy fired,
Yet Luxury and Wealth lay by in state,
And, thankless, starv'd what they so much admired.

This tribute, with a tear, now gives
A brother Bard—he can no more bestow;
But dear to fame thy Song immortal lives,
A nobler monument than Art can shew.

[Hundreds of the admirers of Burns and Fergusson, yearly, from all parts of the world, find their way down the venerable Canongate of Edinburgh, to muse awhile over the graceful memorial which one Scottish bard erected there, to mark the grave of his "elder brother in misfortune" and song. On 6th February, 1787, Burns applied by petition to the Church-yard managers of that Barony, craving permission thus to mark, and render sacred for ever, the spot where Fergusson's remains were laid in October 1774. On 22d February, the necessary grant was given; and forthwith our poet employed his approximate namesake Robert Burn,

architect, to provide and erect the very substantial stone which still "directs pale Scotia's way" to pay reverence to that poet's dust. The memorial has been kept in the finest order, through a well-conceived bequest made by the widow of Hugh Williams, the distinguished painter of "Views in Greece."

Only the first four lines of the text are cut on the face of this interesting tablet, immediately under the following heading:—

"HERE LIES ROBERT FERGUSSON, POET.
Born September 5th 1751.—Died 16th October 1774."

On the reverse side these words are inscribed:—

"By special grant of the Managers to ROBERT BURNS, who erected this stone, This Burial-place is to remain for ever sacred to the memory of ROBERT FERGUSSON."

The additional stanzas are found in Burns's manuscript book of early pieces, supposed to have been transcribed for Mrs. Dunlop, and which is now in the possession of Mr. Macmillan, publisher, London.]

INSCRIBED UNDER FERGUSSON'S PORTRAIT.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

CURSE on ungrateful man, that can be pleased,
And yet can starve the author of the pleasure.
O thou, my elder brother in misfortune,
By far my elder brother in the Muses,
With tears I pity thy unhappy fate!
Why is the bard unpitied by the world,
Yet has so keen a relish of its pleasures?

[These lines were inscribed by Burns in a copy of Fergusson's Poems presented by him to a young lady in Edinburgh, and bear date, March 19th, 1787. They give a somewhat more elegant expression to the same sentiment recorded (vol. I. p. 116,) in his epistle to William Simson:—

My curse upon your whunstane hearts
Ye E'nburgh gentry:
The tythe o' what ye waste on *cartes* — cards
Wad *stow'd* his pantry.] — stored

EPISTLE TO MRS. SCOTT,

GUDEWIFE OF WAUCHOPE-HOUSE, ROXBURGHSHIRE.

(ELIZ. SCOTT'S POEMS, 1801.)

I MIND it weel in early date,
When I was beardless, young, and *blate*, bashful
An' first could *thresh the barn*, thrash in the barn
Or haud a yokin at the pleugh ;*
An' tho' *forfoughten sair enough*, tired out sore enough
Yet *unco* proud to learn : very
When first amang the yellow corn
A man I reckon'd was,
An' wi' the *lave ilk* merry morn rest each
Could rank my rig and lass,†
Still *shearing*, and clearing reaping
The tither *stookèd raw*, row of shocks
Wi' *claivers, an' haivers*, gossiping nonsense
Wearing the day awa.

E'en then, a wish, (I mind its pow'r,)
A wish that to my latest hour
Shall strongly heave my breast,
That I for poor Auld Scotland's sake
Some usefu' plan or book could make,
Or sing a sang at least.
The rough-burr thistle, spreading wide
Amang the bearded *bear*, barley
I turn'd the weeder-clips aside,
An' spar'd the symbol dear :‡

---

* Do a day's work at the plough. There are properly two "yokins" in the day—one from morning till mid-day, one from dinner till night.—J. H.

† A "haflins man" (a lad) or, more frequently, a woman was put on each ridge along with an able-bodied man in reaping-time, the youngster or female getting the easier half, or "clean side" of the ridge. Burns could take the heavier part and, with his lass, keep up his ridge with those of the others.—J. H.

‡ The thistle is the emblem of Scotland, as the rose is of England and the

No nation, no station,
My envy e'er could raise;
A Scot still, *but* blot still, without
I knew nae higher praise.

But still the elements o' sang,
In formless jumble, right an' wrang,
Wild floated in my brain;
'Till on that *har'st* I said before, harvest
My partner in the merry *core*, corps
She rous'd the forming strain;
I see her yet the *sonsie quean*, plump girl
That lighted up my *jingle*, rhymes
Her witching smile, her *pauky een* rogueish eyes
That gart my heart-strings tingle:
I firèd, inspirèd,
At every kindling *keek*, sly glance
But *bashing*, and *dashing*, abashed and ashamed
I fearèd ay to speak.

Health to the sex! *ilk guid chiel* says: each good fellow
Wi' merry dance in winter days,
An' we to share in common;
The gust o' joy, the balm of woe,
The *saul* o' life, the heaven below, soul
Is rapture-giving woman.
Ye surly *sumphs*, who hate the name, dolts
Be mindfu' o' your mither;
She, honest woman, may think shame
That ye're connected with her:
Ye're wae men, ye're nae men you're to be pitied
That slight the lovely dears;
To shame ye, disclaim ye,
Ilk honest *birkie* swears. bright youth

---

shamrock of Ireland. The motto is as appropriate allegorically, as it is true historically: *Nemo me impune lacessit.*—J. H.

For you, no bred to barn and *byre*, cow-stable
Wha sweetly tune the Scottish lyre,
Thanks to you for your line:
The *maried* plaid ye kindly spare, party-colored
By me should gratefully be *ware*; worn
'Twad please me *to the nine*. to perfection
I'd be mair *vaunie* o' my *hap*, boastful covering
Douce hingin owre my curple,*
Than ony ermine ever *lap*, wrapt
Or proud imperial purple.
Farewell then, lang *hale* then, health
An' plenty be your *fa'*; lot
May losses and crosses
Ne'er at your *hallan* ca'! threshold

R. BURNS.

March, 1787.

[This delightful effusion was called forth by way of "Answer" to a lengthy rhymed complimentary letter which the poet received, about three months after his arrival in Edinburgh, from the wife of a Roxburghshire laird, or farmer of the wealthier class, who was an amateur in literature and the fine arts. Her maiden name was Elizabeth Rutherford, and she was niece to Mrs. Cockburn, authoress of the popular lyric, 'I've seen the smiling of Fortune beguiling.'

Mrs. Scott's letter is as follows:

My *cantie* witty, rhyming ploughman, merry
I hafflins doubt it is na true, man,
That ye between the *stilts* was bred, plough-handles
Wi' ploughmen schooled, wi' ploughmen fed;
I doubt it *sair*, ye've drawn your knowledge much
Either frae grammar-school or college.
Guid troth, your saul and body *baith* both
War better fed, I'd *gie* my *aith*, give oath
Than theirs who sup sour milk and *parritch*, oatmeal porridge
And *bummil* through the single †*Carritch*, blunder catechism

* Hanging decently over my back and loins.—J. H.

† The Westminster Assembly of Presbyterian Divines, in 1646, drew up not only "A Confession of Faith," but two Catechisms, a "Larger" and a "Shorter," the latter being an abridgement of the former. It is this that is known in Scotland as "The Single Carritch." Every Scottish child learns it at school.—J. H.

Whaever heard the ploughman speak,
Could tell *gif* Homer was a Greek? if
He'd flee as soon upon a cudgel,
As get a single line of Virgil.
And then sae slee ye crack your jokes
O' Willie Pitt and Charlie Fox:
Our great men a' sae weel *descrive*, describe
And how to *gar* the nation thrive, make
Ane *maist* wad swear ye dwalt amang them, almost
And as ye saw them, sae ye sang them.
But be ye ploughman, be ye peer,
Ye are a funny blade, I swear;
And though the *cauld* I ill can *bide*, cold endure
Yet twenty miles and mair I'd ride
O'er moss and moor, and never grumble,
Though my *auld yad* should gie a stumble, old horse
To crack a winter night wi' thee,
And hear thy sangs and sonnets *slee*. sly
Oh gif I kenn'd but whare ye *baide*, abode
I'd send to you a *marled* plaid; party-colored
'Twad *haud* your *shouthers* warm and *braw*, keep shoulders gay
And *douce* at kirk or market *shaw*; decently show
Fra' south as weel as north, my lad, from
A' honest Scotsmen lo'e the "*maud*." plaid
Right *wae* that we're sae far *frae ither*; sorry from each other
Yet proud I am to *ca'* ye *brither*. call brother

Your most obed. E. S.

To Robert Burns, the Ayrshire Bard. Feb. 1787.

Dr. Currie in 1800 printed only the three opening stanzas of Burns's poem in the text, under the heading "On my Early Days." Most unaccountably, the piece was withdrawn from all subsequent editions, and was not restored even by Gilbert Burns in 1820. Dr. Walker in 1811, omitted it, while Peterkin, in 1815, and Hamilton Paul, in 1819, gave only the fragment from Currie's first edition. It seems to have been first included entire in Wm. Clark's edition, 1831, where Mrs. Scott's letter is also given. The "Gudewife of Wauchope-house" died on Feb. 19th, 1789, just about two years after inditing her letter to Burns; but her collected poems were published in 1801 by her relatives: and from that source the complete poem in the text is given. The beautiful reference in the third stanza is to the charming incident related in the poet's autobiography about "Handsome Nell," who initiated him in the mysteries of love. The poet visited the "Gudewife of Wauchope-house" while on his Border tour in the May following the date of his poem; but seems not to have been peculiarly "taken with her." We have no means of knowing if she presented him with the "marled plaid" she had promised him.]

VERSES INTENDED TO BE WRITTEN BELOW A NOBLE EARL'S PICTURE.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1839.)

WHOSE is that noble, dauntless brow?
  And whose that eye of fire?
And whose that generous princely mien,
  E'en rooted foes admire?

Stranger! to justly show that brow,
  And mark that eye of fire,
Would take His hand, whose vernal tints
  His other works admire.

Bright as a cloudless summer sun,
  With stately port he moves;
His guardian Seraph eyes with awe
  The noble Ward he loves.

Among the illustrious Scottish sons,
  That Chief thou may'st discern;
Mark Scotia's fond-returning eye,
  It dwells upon Glencairn.

[Among several of the nobility and gentry to whom the bard was early introduced in the Scottish capital, he seems to have taken most kindly and reverently to James Cunninghame, fourteenth Earl of Glencairn. He was born in 1749, and therefore was just ten years older than the poet: he succeeded to the title at his father's death in 1775, and was himself prematurely cut off in January 1791. His only brother, the Hon. and Rev. John Cunninghame, married Isabella, sister of the Earl of Buchan, in 1785, and succeeded as fifteenth Earl of Glencairn when his brother died. When Earl John died in 1796, without issue, the title became extinct.

Earl William, the father of Burns's patron, succeeded to the title in 1733, and was fain to recruit his exhausted revenues by marrying, in 1744, the eldest daughter of Hugh M'Guire, a poor musician

of Ayr, whose family had been adopted by Governor Macrae, an Indian nabob of untold wealth. Charles Dalrymple, Sheriff-clerk of Ayr, in 1743 married another daughter, who succeeded to the estate of Orangefield on the death of Mr. Macrae, who had purchased it for his own residence.

The above details provide a key to the proper understanding of the links which united the coterie of notables who first gave Burns the right hand of fellowship when he arrived in Edinburgh. Robert Aiken of Ayr was a relative of Mr. Dalrymple of Orangefield, whose patronage Burns refers to in the closing stanza of "The Vision," (suppressed verses, p. 245, vol. I.) Mr. Dalrymple introduced the poet to his cousin, the Earl of Glencairn, through whom, again, he became acquainted with the Earl of Buchan and his brother, Harry Erskine, the Dean of Faculty. Through Glencairn also, Creech became Burns's publisher, that learned "bibliopole" having formerly been travelling tutor to the young Earl.*

Our author, who was ever anxious to repay his patrons with such coin as the Muse readily supplied, made application to Lord Glencairn for permission to print, in his forthcoming edition, the verses in the text. It appears, however, that his lordship's modesty, or refined taste, prompted him to refuse the poet's request. Dr. Currie refers to this matter, but seems not to have been aware that the verses were preserved. Cunningham obtained them from the Earl's namesake, James Glencairn Burns, who then possessed the original MS. now preserved in the poet's monument in Edinburgh.]

(Taking it all in all we regard this as one of the least happy specimens of Burns's Muse, and we cannot but regret that the poet did not follow the counsel of his noble patron and keep it from the light. It is offensive as an example of fulsome adution, weak poetically, and—a rare fault for Burns—marred by obscurity in the concluding couplet of the second stanza. Other editors have endeavored to lighten this obscurity by substituting "inspire" for "admire" in this couplet, we print the piece as we find it in the poet's holograph. The third stanza, in which "His guardian Seraph eyes with awe the noble Ward he loves," we refrain from characterising further than by observing that when Burns essays adulation his hand seems to forget its cunning. One excuse—and only one—can be offered. Glencairn was the first of the aristocracy to notice Burns—a vastly greater condescension in those days than a similar act would be now. He exerted himself actively in the poet's behalf, and, as said above, was one

* The above shows one chain of connection, but the writer has forgotten his introduction to Dr. Blacklock, through Mr. Lawrie sending the blind poet a copy of the Kilmarnock edition, also Professor Dugald Stewart's influence. Other friends than those he names gladly gave Burns "the right hand" on his arrival at Edinburgh.—J. H.

main means of introducing him to the highest society in Edinburgh, as well as to his Publisher, Creech. Burns was a man of keen susceptibilities and strong impulses, and prone to express himself strongly from motives of pure gratitude. The name given to his fourth son born after the Earl's death proves that the gratitude was not due to "expectation of favors yet to come." All this notwithstanding, we wish that we could have seen our way to omit the piece from this collection; but we must show Burns as he was, in all his weakness as in all his strength.—J. H.)

PROLOGUE,

SPOKEN BY MR. WOODS ON HIS BENEFIT NIGHT, MONDAY, 16TH APRIL, 1787.

(STEWART, 1801.)

WHEN, by a generous Public's kind acclaim,
That dearest need is granted—honest fame;
When here your favor is the actor's lot,
Nor even the man in private life forgot;
What breast so dead to heavenly Virtue's glow,
But heaves impassion'd with the grateful throe?

Poor is the task to please a barb'rous throng,
It needs no Siddons' powers in Southern's song;[1]
But here an ancient nation fam'd afar,
For genius, learning high, as great in war.
Hail, CALEDONIA, name forever dear!
Before whose sons I'm honored to appear!
Where every science, every nobler art,
That can inform the mind or mend the heart,
Is known; as grateful nations oft have found,
Far as the rude barbarian marks the bound.
Philosophy,* no idle pedant dream,
Here holds her search by heaven-taught Reason's beam;

* Professor Reid at Glasgow, and Dugald Stewart at Edinburgh.

Here History * paints with elegance and force
The tide of Empire's fluctuating course;
Here Douglas † forms wild Shakspeare into plan,‡
And Harley § rouses all the God in man.
When well-formed taste and sparkling wit unite
With manly lore, or female beauty bright,
(Beauty, where faultless symmetry and grace
Can only charm us in the second place),
Witness my heart, how oft with panting fear,
As on this night, I've met these judges here!
But still the hope Experience taught to live,
Equal to judge—you're candid to forgive.
No hundred-headed Riot here we meet,
With decency and law beneath his feet;
Nor Insolence assumes fair Freedom's name:
Like CALEDONIANS, you applaud or blame.

O Thou, dread Power! whose empire-giving hand
Has oft been stretch'd to shield the honor'd land!
Strong may she glow with all her ancient fire;
May every son be worthy of his sire;[2]
Firm may she rise, with generous disdain
At Tyranny's, or direr Pleasure's chain;
Still Self-dependent in her native shore,
Bold may she brave grim Danger's loudest roar,
Till Fate the curtain drop on worlds to be no more.

[William Woods, who was styled the "Scottish Roscius," had

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* Robertson and Hume the historians.

† Home's Tragedy of Douglas.

‡ This is almost on a par with the judgment of the patriotic Scotchman, who, on seeing Douglas performed for the first time in London, called out enthusiastically: "Whaur's your Wullie Shakespere now?" A correspondent of Mr. Douglas says: "That Burns should have written thus of Home's tragedy and Shakespere's genius is the most striking instance of defective taste or judgment we have in his whole literary history." The correspondent forgets that Burns was writing for a Scotch audience in a Scotch theatre, and that in such circumstances a little exaggeration by way of flattering national sentiment or prejudice is almost *en regle*.—J. H.

§ The hero of "The Man of Feeling," by Henry Mackenzie.

been an intimate associate of the poet Fergusson, who thus remembered him in his "Last Will:"—

> "To Woods, whose genius can provoke
> His passions to the bowl or sock,
> For love to thee and to the Nine,
> Be my immortal Shakespeare thine.'

It is not surprising, therefore, that Burns cultivated his society Woods played the part of Ford in the "Merry Wives of Windsor" on the occasion for which the prologue was written. It is not a very happy effort, and yet evidence exists to show that it cost the poet some trouble. J. B. Greenshields, Esq., of Kerse, Lesmahagow, is in possession of the author's original draft, from which we note the variations appended.

In the MS. referred to, this paragraph thus opens:—

> [1] Small is the task to please a gaping throng
> Unmeaning rant, extravagance of song:
> Heavy Stupidity all rueful views
> The Tyburn humors of the tragic Muse,
> Or roars at times the loud, rough laugh between,
> As horse-play nonsense shews her comic scene.
> But here, &c.

(or)

> . . . extravagance of song:
> The vacant, staring eye all rueful views
> The Tyburn humors of the tragic Muse;
> Or comic scenes the merry roar engage
> As horse-play nonsense thunders o'er the stage.
> But here, &c.

The closing five lines are as follow:—

> [2] May never sallow Want her bounty stint,
> Nor selfish maxim dare the sordid hint;
> But may her virtues ever be her prop;
> Thou her best stay, and Thou her surest hope,
> Till Fate on worlds the eternal curtain drop.

THE BONIE MOOR-HEN.

(Cromek, 1808.)

The heather was blooming, the meadows were mawn,
Our lads *gaed* a-hunting ae day at the dawn, went
O'er moors and o'er mosses and mony a glen,
At length they discover'd a bonie moor-hen.

Chorus.—
I *rede* you, beware at the hunting, young council
men,
I rede you, beware at the hunting, young men;
Take some on the wing, and some as they spring,
But cannily steal on a bonie moor-hen.

Sweet-brushing the dew from the brown heather bells,
Her colors betray'd her on yon mossy fells;
Her plumage outlustr'd the pride o' the spring,
And O! as she wanton'd sae gay on the wing.
I rede you, &c.

Auld Phœbus himsel, as he peep'd o'er the hill,
In spite at her plumage he tryèd his skill;
He levell'd his rays where she bask'd on the *brae*— hill
His rays were outshone, and but mark'd where she lay.
I rede you, &c.

They hunted the valley, they hunted the hill,
The best of our lads wi' the best o' their skill;
But still as the fairest she sat in their sight,
Then, whirr! she was over, a mile at a flight.

I rede you, beware at the hunting, young men,
I red you, beware at the hunting, young men;
She's red i' the tap, and she's black whar ye ken,
And these are the marks o' my bonie moor-hen.

[The above song undoubtedly belongs to this period of the poet's history. Some of his "Crochallan" associates were members of the Caledonian Hunt, to whom the subject would not be objectionable. It is formed on the model of an old song of more wit than delicacy which is found in the Crochallan collection, each stanza of which opens with the line

"I rede ye beware o' the ripples, young man,"

and forms the prelude to some really judicious advice, delivered in a very "pawkie" manner—for instance,

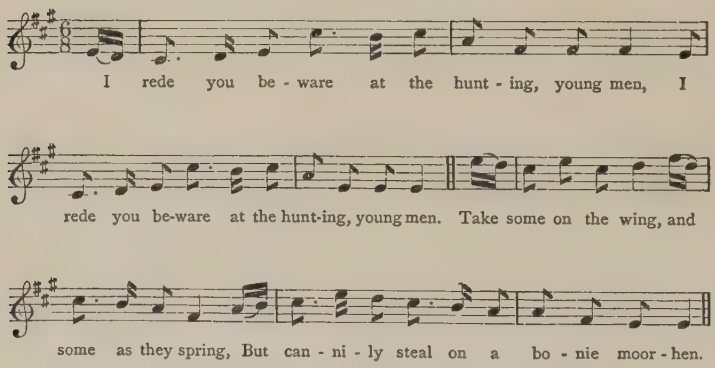
> "Tho' music be pleasure, tak music in measure,
> Or sune ye'll want wind i' your whistle, young man."

Burns thought so well of the song in the text, that he could not resist giving Clarinda a perusal of it. That lady in her next letter thus counselled him on the subject—"Do not publish the Moorhen. Do not, for your sake and mine."

The tune to which this song was composed is a very old favorite, known as "The Tailor's March," from which the popular air "Logie o' Buchan" was constructed. To show the connection between the two melodies, we here annex the old "March:" the more modern tune, "Logie o' Buchan," will be found in all ordinary collections.]

(The title of the song, and its local coloring, remind us of the upper Clyde, described in "Yon Wild Mossy Mountains."—J. H.)

Air—"The Tailor's March."



SONG—MY LORD A-HUNTING.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1803.)

Chorus.—

My lady's gown, there's gairs upon 't,
And *gowden* flowers *sae* rare upon 't; * golden so
But Jenny's jimps and jirkinet,†
My lord thinks *meikle mair* upon 't. much more

My lord a-hunting he is gane,
But hounds or hawks wi' him are nane;
By Colin's cottage lies his game,
If Colin's Jenny be at hame.
My lady's gown, &c.

My lady's white, my lady's red,
And *kith and kin o'* Cassillis' blude; closely akin to
But her ten-pund lands o' *tocher* gude‡ dower
Were a' the charms his lordship *lo'ed.* loved
My lady's gown, &c.

Out o'er yon muir, out o'er yon moss,
Whare gor-cocks thro' the heather pass,
There *wons* auld Colin's bonie lass, dwells
A lily in a wilderness.
My lady's gown, &c.

Sae sweetly move her genty limbs,
Like music notes o' lover's hymns:
The diamond-dew in her *een* sae blue, eyes
Where laughing love sae wanton swims.
My lady's gown, &c.

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* My lady's gown has colored insertions slashed into it and golden flowers of rare beauty worked upon it.—J. H.

† Jimps and jerkinet (or jerkenette) are the body and outer corset or stays worn by a maiden.—J. H.

‡ Ten-pund lands are lands that pay a yearly tax of ten pounds. This implies a large property.—J. H.

My lady's *dink*, my lady's drest, precise
The flower and fancy o' the west;
But the lassie that a man *lo'es* best, loves
O that's the lass to mak him blest.
My lady's gown, &c.

(This is an old Scottish song or ballad exquisitely amended. It lets us see that the morality of the ancient aristocracy was not one whit purer than that of their descendants in Burns's days. The piece was furnished to Johnson at an early date in the progress of his undertaking, and Stenhouse accounts for the late publication of it by telling us that "Johnson long hesitated to admit the song into his work; but being blamed for such fastidiousness, he at length gave it a place there."—J. H.)

MINOR PIECES, SCRAPS, AND EPIGRAMS.

[The dedication of the Author's Edinburgh Edition is dated 4th April 1787, and a few days thereafter he commenced a private Journal, protected with clasp and patent lock, as "a security at least equal to the bosom of any friend whatsoever." His first entry in that secret record indicates the proposed contents of the book, thus—"My own private story, my love adventures, my rambles; the frowns and smiles of Fortune on my bardship; my poems and fragments that must never see the light—these shall be occasionally inserted."

The reason which he states for procuring the book is that, while he fain would have some confidential friend to laugh or be grave with him, he yet doubts the possibility "of so intimate and cordial a coalition of friendship, as that one man may pour out his every thought and floating fancy, with unreserved confidence, to another, without hazard of losing part of that respect which man deserves from man.—For those reasons (he adds) I am determined to make these pages my confidant."

The present, and all previous biographical notices of Burns, and every collection of his writings honestly intended to supply public demand, form together a strange commentary on the above passage. When the bard felt himself dying, he lamented his then physical disability, and his lost opportunities, to arrange his papers so that none of his writings should go forth to the world except such as might sustain his moral and literary reputation. He also expressed such rueful anticipations of damage to his good name from the raking up of every little incident in his history by

"hackney scribblers,"—that in these days, we may well wonder how so little regard has been paid to injunctions and wishes thus recorded, both in the day of his strength, and in the night of his woe. The world, however, has decided, in spite of the bard's protestations, that every scrap—good, bad, and indifferent—he is known to have penned, shall be brought to light and examined; and that no incident in his life is too petty to be rehearsed and made the subject of comment.

The editor of these volumes would fain escape from the necessity of including in this collection such trifling versicles as, now and again, he must lay before the reader. Few of those referred to are equal in quality to the author's avowed compositions; and the authenticity of certain of them is neither vouched by the production of the poet's manuscript, nor made sure by the native ring and flow which characterize the true lines of Burns. But be they what they may, the editor feels bound to be chary in excluding pieces that have already been adopted in previous standard editions of the poet's works.]

EPIGRAM AT ROSLIN INN.

(Hogg and Motherwell, 1835.)

My blessings on ye, honest wife!
  I ne'er was here before;
Ye've wealth o' *gear* for spoon and knife— supply
  Heart could not wish for more.
Heav'n keep you clear o' *sturt* and strife, trouble
  Till far *ayont* fourscore, beyond
And while I *toddle* on thro' life, saunter
  I'll ne'er *gae by* your door! go past

EPIGRAM ADDRESSED TO AN ARTIST.

(Chambers, 1852.)

Dear ———, I'll gie ye some advice,
  You'll tak it no uncivil:
You shouldna paint at angels mair,
  But try and paint the devil.

To paint an Angel's *kittle wark*, ticklish work
Wi' Nick, there's little danger:
You'll easy draw a *lang-kent* face, long-known
But no *sae weel* a stranger.—R. B. so well

[Chambers tells us, in reference to the first of these versicles, that Alexander Nasmyth, who painted the well-known portrait of Burns, had occasional rambles with the poet in the early spring of 1787, in the suburbs of Edinburgh. According to the information of that artist's son, they had also a few convivial sederunts within the city at night; and on one of those occasions, they tarried so long over the wine, that, instead of each going home in the morning, they agreed to take a refreshing walk to the Pentland Hills. After a fine ramble on the moors, they crossed eastward, by way of Penicuik to Roslin, and had breakfast at the inn there, then kept by Mrs. David Wilson. The cheer provided put Burns into such good humor, that he scrawled these complimentary lines to his hostess, on the back of a wooden platter. Chambers' version differs from our text in the last line but one, and is unnecessarily strong in its language, thus:—"And by the Lord o' death and life."

EPIGRAM TO AN ARTIST.—According to Chambers, Burns was taken by a friend to the studio of a well-known artist in Edinburgh, whom he found engaged on a representation of Jacob's dream; and after minutely examining the work, he wrote these lines on the back of a little sketch which is still preserved in the painter's family.

It would have been satisfactory to be told the name of the artist who was so familiar with the Devil's physiognomy, and so much ignored by Angels.]

THE BOOK-WORMS.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

THROUGH and through th' inspir'd leaves,
Ye maggots, make your windings;
But O respect his lordship's taste,
And spare the golden bindings.

[On visiting a nobleman in Edinburgh (it is said), Burns was shewn into the library, where stood a Shakespeare splendidly

bound, but time-worn, and unaired by occasional use. He found the leaves sadly worm-eaten, and wrote the above epigram on the ample margin of one of its pages.

Long after our poet's death, some one happened to open the book, and found the lines in the unmistakeable hand-writing of Burns.]

ON ELPHINSTONE'S TRANSLATION OF MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS.

(STEWART, 1801.)

O THOU whom Poesy abhors,
Whom Prose has turnèd out of doors,
Heard'st thou yon groan?—proceed no further,
'Twas laurel'd Martial calling "murther."

[Burns himself thus narrates, in one of his letters to Clarinda, the incident that gave rise to the foregoing very pointed epigram —"A Mr. Elphinstone has given a translation of Martial, a famous Latin poet. The poetry of Elphinstone can only equal his prose notes. I was sitting in a merchant's shop of my acquaintance, waiting somebody; he put Elphinstone into my hand, and asked my opinion of it. I begged leave to write it on a blank leaf, which I did."]

SONG—A BOTTLE AND FRIEND.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

"There's nane that's blest of human kind,
But the cheerful and the gay, man,
Fal la, la," &c.

HERE'S a bottle and an honest friend!
What *wad* ye wish for *mair*, man? would more
Wha kens, before his life may end, who knows
What his share may be o' care, man?

Then catch the moments as they fly,
And use them as ye ought, man:
Believe me, happiness is shy,
And comes not ay when sought, man.

[This happy little strain was reproduced in Pickering's edition, with the motto prefixed, which had been left out by Cromek. The editor states that the verses are printed from a copy in Burns's handwriting.]

LINES WRITTEN UNDER THE PICTURE OF THE CELEBRATED MISS BURNS.

(STEWART, 1801.)

CEASE, ye prudes, your envious railing,
Lovely Burns has charms—confess:
True it is, she had one failing,
Had a woman ever less?

[There can be no doubt that this frail beauty resided in Edinburgh during the period of our poet's first sojourn there. Kay, in his Edinburgh Portraits, has two pictures of her; one of these is dated 1785, and the other is undated. Her real name was Matthews; and she represented herself as being a native of Durham, in which city her father had been a substantial merchant. Her personal demeanor and superior education betokened an acquaintance with the better class of society; and she accounted for her degraded position by explaining that her mother died, and her father contracted a second marriage with a woman who rendered her life so miserable, that she was glad to escape from control. She left Edinburgh about the end of 1787, and returned in 1789. The reader will hear of her again in the poet's correspondence about the latter date.]

Miss Burns

"CEASE YE PRUDES YOUR ENVIOUS RAILING,
LOVELY BURNS HAS CHARMS—CONFESS

EPITAPH FOR WILLIAM NICOL, OF THE HIGH SCHOOL, EDINBURGH.

(WM. CLARK'S ED., 1831.)

YE maggots, feed on Nicol's brain,
For few sic feasts you've gotten;
And fix your claws in Nicol's heart,
For *deil a bit o't's* rotten. deuce a bit of it is

(Nicol was a Dumfries-shire man. Burns became acquainted with him during his first visit to Edinburgh. He accompanied the poet on his northern tour, and subsequently bought the farm of Laggan, Glencairn parish, and thus became Burns's neighbor. He was a man of remarkable vigor of mind, hot temper, social habits, and given to express himself freely and strongly—in short, altogether after Burns's own heart. Some think that it was at the househeating of Laggan that he "brewed the peck o' maut," so widely famed. At all events Nicol is the Willie and his colleague Masterton, the Allan.—J. H.)

EPITAPH FOR MR. WILLIAM MICHIE,

SCHOOLMASTER OF CLEISH PARISH, FIFESHIRE.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

HERE lie Willie Michie's banes,
O Satan, when ye tak him,
Gie him the *schulin* o' your weans, schooling
For clever deils he'll mak them!

[Cunningham says that Michie was introduced to Burns in Edinburgh: but no farther information has been vouchsafed to us regarding this clever dominie.]

BOAT-SONG.—HEY, CA' THRO'.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1792.)

UP wi' the carls o' Dysart,
And the lads o' Buckhaven,
And the kimmers o' Largo,
And the lasses o' Leven.*

Chorus.—Hey, ca' thro', ca' thro',
For we hae mickle ado;
Hey, ca' thro', ca' thro',
For we hae mickle ado.

We hae tales to tell,
An' we hae sangs to sing;
We hae pennies to spend,
An' we hae pints to bring.
Hey, ca' thro', &c.

We'll live a' our days,
And them that comes behin',
Let them do the like,
An' spend the gear they win.
Hey, ca' thro', &c.

[There is much of wholesome philosophy in this canty little snatch. We believe that no portion of it was ever seen in print until its appearance in *Johnson*. It has all the appearance of being a revision of an old piece, possibly of an old Fife song repeated or sung to him by his friend Michie. "Whether a revision or original," says Waddell, "it is at least a most characteristic sketch of fisherman life on the coast of Fife, where the Scotch is highly impregnated with the reckless old Dutch and Norwegian sea-faring element."—J. H.]

* All fishing villages on the Fife coast.—J. H.

ADDRESS TO WM. TYTLER, ESQ., OF WOODHOUSELEE,

WITH AN IMPRESSION OF THE AUTHOR'S PORTRAIT.*

(CURRIE, 1800.)

REVERÉD defender of beauteous Stuart,†
  Of Stuart, a name once respected;
A name, which to love was the mark of a true heart,
  But now 'tis despis'd and neglected.

Tho' something like moisture conglobes in my eye,
  Let no one misdeem me disloyal;
A poor friendless wand'rer may well claim a sigh,
  Still more, if that wand'rer were royal.

My fathers that name have rever'd on a throne:
  My fathers have died to right it;
Those fathers would spurn their degenerate son,
  That name should he scoffingly slight it.‡

Still in prayers for King George I most heartily join,
  The Queen, and the rest of the gentry:
Be they wise, be they foolish, is nothing of mine;
  Their title's avowed by my country.

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* This presentation copy of Beugo's engraving is now in the possession of David Laing, Esq., LL.D.

† Mr. Tytler's "Vindication of Mary Queen of Scots" appeared in the year our poet was born, and reached a fourth edition. In 1783, he edited the poems of King James I. of Scotland.

‡ The poet's ancestors were farmers in the Mearns on the estate of the Earl Marischal, now represented by the Earl of Kintore. The Keiths (the family name of this noble family) were keen Jacobites, and Burns does not doubt his fathers followed them to the field. A statue to the famed Marshal Keith, attainted in 1715, now ornaments Berlin. See Autobiography, p. 334, vol. I, with note.—J. H.

But why of that epocha make such a fuss,
  That gave us th' Electoral stem?
If bringing them over was lucky for us,
  I'm sure 'twas as lucky for them.*

But loyalty truce! we're on dangerous ground;
  Who knows how the fashions may alter?
The doctrine, to-day, that is loyalty sound,
  To-morrow may bring us a halter!

I send you a trifle, a head of a bard,
  A trifle scarce worthy your care;
But accept it, good Sir, as a mark of regard,
  Sincere as a saint's dying prayer.

Now life's chilly evening dim shades on your eye,
  And ushers the long dreary night:
But you, like the star that athwart gilds the sky,
  Your course to the latest is bright.

My muse jilted me here, and turned a corner on me, and I have not got again into her good graces.

. . .†

Do me the justice to believe me sincere in my grateful remembrance of the many civilities you have honored me with since I came to Edinburgh, and in assuring you that I have the honor to be, revered Sir,

Your obliged and very humble servant,

ROBERT BURNS.

LAWNMARKET, *Friday noon.*

(*Addressed*) MR. TYTLER of Woodhouselee, New Street.

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*Currie gave only the first line of this verse, asterisks supplying the rest.

†Three lines of the poet's MS., here carefully obliterated, most likely containing some ultra-Jacobite sally.—J. H.

[It seems evident that the above was forwarded to the poet's venerable correspondent on the 4th May 1787,—just the day before he started on the Border tour with Robert Ainslie. The poet had frequent interviews with Mr. Tytler, in connection with the music and letter-press for *Johnson's Museum* which Mr. Tytler had hitherto superintended. The first volume of that work appeared about the end of May; and Burns relieved that gentleman of such editorial labors in respect of the succeeding volumes, he being then in his seventy-seventh year.

Mr. Tytler survived to 12th Sept. 1792, a healthy and happy old man: his prescription for all who desired to enjoy like blessings, was "temperate meals, good music, and a sound conscience." The original manuscript of our text is now in possession of Mr. Tytler's great grandson, Colonel Fraser Tytler of Aldourie.]

EPIGRAM TO MISS AINSLIE IN CHURCH.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

FAIR maid, you need not take the hint,
  Nor idle texts pursue:
'Twas guilty sinners that he meant,
  Not *Angels* such as you.

[Among the intimacies formed by Burns in Edinburgh, was that contracted with Mr. Robert Ainslie, son of a farmer at Berriewell near Dunse, then a writer's clerk, and afterwards a Writer to the Signet. After the publication of his Edinburgh Edition Burns set out on a riding tour through the borders. Mr. Ainslie accompanied him as far as Berriewell, where they arrived Saturday 5th May. Next day, Burns attended the church at Dunse, and the minister gave out a text containing a heavy denunciation against obstinate sinners. Seeing Miss Ainslie engaged in a search for it, Burns asked for her Bible, and immediately wrote the above lines on the inner board, and presented it for her perusal.

The poet kept a Journal of his tour, and his entry under Sunday May 6th, is the following—"Went to church at Dunse, Dr. Bowmaker, a man of strong lungs and pretty judicious remark; but ill-skilled in propriety, and altogether unconscious of the want of it."

Of Miss Ainslie, the poet's Journal makes frequent mention, in very complimentary terms. The last of these is under 23d May—

"Found Miss Ainslie—the amiable, the sensible, the good-humored, the sweet Miss Ainslie—all alone at Berriewell. Heavenly powers, who know the weakness of human hearts, support mine! . . . . Charming Rachel! may thy bosom never be wrung by the evils of this life of sorrows, or by the villany of this world's sons."

Chambers informs us that she died unmarried, upwards of sixty years old.—J. H.]

BURLESQUE LAMENT FOR THE ABSENCE OF WILLIAM CREECH, PUBLISHER.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

AULD chuckie Reekie's * sair distrest, — old brood hen (*mother*)
Down droops her ance weel burnish'd crest,
Nae joy her bonie *buskit* nest — decorated
Can yield *ava*, — at all
Her darling bird that she *lo'es* best— — loves
Willie's *awa.* — away

O Willie was a witty *wight*, — man of mark
And had o' things an unco' sleight,
Auld Reekie ay he keepit tight,
And *trig* an *braw*: — neat, elegant
But now they'll *busk* her like a fright,— — decorate
Willie's awa!

The stiffest o' them a' he bow'd,
The *bauldest* o' them a' he *cow'd*; — boldest, frightened
They *durst* nae mair than he allow'd, — dared
That was a law:
We've lost a *birkie* weel worth *gowd*; — sharp fellow, gold
Willie's awa!

---

*Few readers will require to be told that "Auld Reekie" means Edinburgh, so designed from the smoke of its many chimneys hovering over the city. The poet here refers to that city under the figure of the maternal hen with her brood of chickens.

Now *gawkies*, *tawpies*, *gowks* and fools, fops coxcombs blockheads
Frae colleges and boarding schools,
May sprout like *simmer puddock-stools* summer mushrooms
In glen or *shaw;* wood
He wha could brush them down to *mools*— mould
Willie's awa!

The brethren o' the *commerce-chaumer** chamber of commerce
May mourn their loss wi' *doolfu'* clamor; mournful
He was a dictionar and grammar
Amang them a';
I fear they'll now mak mony a *stammer;* blunder
Willie's awa!

Nae mair we see his levee door
Philosophers and Poets pour,
And toothy critics by the score,
In bloody raw!
The adjutant o' a' the core—
Willie's awa!

Now worthy Gregory's Latin face,
Tytler's and Greenfield's modest grace;
M'Kenzie, Stewart, such a brace
As Rome ne'er saw;
They a' *maun* meet some ither place,† must
Willie's awa!

Poor Burns ev'n "Scotch Drink" canna quicken,
He *cheeps* like some bewilder'd chicken chirps

---

* The Chamber of Commerce, of which Creech was Secretary.

† The breakfasts in Creech's house were attended by the élite of Scotland's learned men. Those specified are Dr. James Gregory, Author of *Conspectus Medicinæ;* Alexander Tytler, afterwards Lord Woodhouselee; Dr. William Greenfield, Professor of Rhetoric, Edinburgh University; Henry McKenzie, Author of *Man of Feeling;* and Dugald Stewart, Professor of Moral Philosophy.—J. H.

Scar'd frae it's *minnie* and the *cleckin*, mother brood
By *hoodie-craw ;* hooded crow
Grief's gien his heart an unco kickin,
Willie's awa !

Now ev'ry *sour-mou'd girnin blellum*,*
And Calvin's folk, are fit to fell him ;
Ilk self-conceited critic *skellum* blockhead
His quill may draw ; perfectly
He wha could *brawlie* ward their *bellum*— attack
Willie's awa !

Up *wimpling* stately Tweed I've sped, winding
And Eden scenes on crystal Jed,
And Ettrick banks, now roaring red,
While tempests blaw ;
But every joy and pleasure 's fled,
Willie's awa ! †

May I be Slander's common speech ;
A text for Infamy to preach ;
And lastly, *streekit* out to bleach stretched
In winter snaw ;
When I forget thee, WILLIE CREECH,
Tho' far awa !

May never wicked Fortune touzle him ! ‡
May never wicked men bamboozle him !
Until a *pow* as *auld's* Methusalem head old
He *canty claw !* cheery scratch
Then to the blessed new Jerusalem,
Fleet wing awa !

[The above poem was inclosed in a letter to Mr. Creech, then in London, written from the principal Inn of Selkirk during the

* Sour-mouthed, ill-conditioned blusterer.
† This verse is not in the original MS.
‡ Handle him roughly.—J. H.

poet's Border tour, on Sunday 13th May. He addresses Mr. Creech as "his honored friend," and tells him that the verses were just written "nearly extempore after a miserable, wet day's riding." We have been favored by the representatives of Mr. Creech with an inspection of the original manuscript, and accordingly are enabled to present the text in a more correct form than Cromek gave it. A note by the poet, addressed to Mr. Creech, four days after the foregoing was penned, is preserved in Burns's Monument at Edinburgh, in which he claims respect for it on this odd ground: "I am miserably fou, consequently it must be the sentiments of my heart." This was written from Berriewell, on the day after a late dinner "at Dunse with the Farmers' Club—company, impossible to do them justice."

Mr. Creech was frequently in the Council and Magistracy of Edinburgh. His first election as Bailie was in October 1788; and from October 1811 to October 1813, he officiated as Lord Provost. His death occurred on 14th January, 1815.]

NOTE TO MR. RENTON OF LAMERTON.

(CHAMBERS, 1851.)

YOUR billet, Sir, I grant receipt;
Wi' you I'll canter *ony gate*, anywhere
Tho' 'twere a trip to yon *blue warl'*,*
Whare *birkies* march on burning marl: fellows
Then, Sir, God willing, I'll attend ye,
And to his goodness I commend ye.

R. BURNS.

[In the course of the poet's border tour, he was in the neighborhood of Berwick-on-Tweed, on 19th May. Chambers says, "there is reason to think that Mr. Renton attempted on that occasion to form an appointment with Burns for a meeting and ride together." The poet makes no reference to this matter in his journal; but the above rhymed note in the bard's handwriting has been found among Mr. Renton's papers. That gentleman's country seat was Mordington House, near Berwick.]

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* Hell—so named from the color of the flame of burning brimstone. Hence the vulgar phrase "A blue look-out."—J. H.

ELEGY ON "STELLA."

(ALEX. SMITH'S ED., 1865.)

The following poem is the work of some hapless son of the Muses who deserved a better fate. There is a great deal of 'The voice of Cona' in his solitary, mournful notes; and had the sentiments been clothed in Shenstone's language, they would have been no discredit even to that elegant poet.—*R. B.*

STRAIT is the spot and green the sod
  From whence my sorrows flow;
And soundly sleeps the ever dear
  Inhabitant below.

Pardon my transport, gentle shade,
  While o'er the turf I bow;
Thy earthly house is circumscrib'd,
  And solitary now.

Not one poor stone to tell thy name,
  Or make thy virtues known;
But what avails to me—to thee,
  The sculpture of a stone?*

From thy lov'd friends, when first thy heart
  Was taught by Heav'n to glow,
Far, far remov'd, the ruthless stroke
  Surpris'd, and laid thee low.

At the last limits of our isle,
  Wash'd by the western wave,
Touch'd by thy fate, a thoughtful bard
  Sits lonely by thy grave.

---

*Eight stanzas omitted, see note (1).

Pensive he eyes, before him spread
  The deep, outstretch'd and vast;
His mourning notes are borne away
  Along the rapid blast.* (2)

Him too the stern impulse of Fate
  Resistless bears along;
And the same rapid tide shall whelm
  The Poet and the Song.

The tear of pity which he sheds,
  He asks not to receive;
Let but his poor remains be laid
  Obscurely in the grave.

His grief-worn heart, with truest joy,
  Shall meet the welcome shock:
His airy harp shall lie unstrung,
  And silent as the rock.

O my dear maid, my Stella, when
  Shall this sick period close,
And lead the solitary bard
  To his belov'd repose?

[The preceding ten stanzas, which form a kind of connected whole, are progressively culled from a monotonous effusion twenty verses long, that was transcribed by Burns into a manuscript book containing many of his early productions, and presented by him to Mrs. Dunlop of Dunlop. Burns, in his heading prefixed to the elegy, does not claim it as his own; but even if it were certain that Burns was not the author, still (as Alex. Smith observes) "the knowledge that he admired it, and that through his agency it alone exists, is considered sufficient excuse for its admission here."] (Assuming the piece to be Burns's, its most probable association is with that mysterious excursion to the West Highlands, towards which, it has been surmised, he was drawn by his feelings regarding Mary Campbell. Chambers says: "It is not unlikely that he visited her relations at Greenock. Imagination

* Two stanzas omitted, see note (2).

fondly pauses to behold him stretched on her grave in the West Kirkyard, bewailing her untimely severance from his arms."—J. H.)

We append the stanzas omitted in our abridgment of this singular piece.

(1) I'll sit me down upon this turf, and wipe the rising tear:
The chill blast passes swiftly by, and flits around thy bier.

Dark is the dwelling of the dead, and sad their house of rest:
Low lies the head, by death's cold arms in aweful fold embrac'd.

I saw the grim Avenger stand incessant by thy side,
Unseen by thee; his deadly breath thy lingering frame destroy'd.

Pale grew the roses on thy cheek, and wither'd was thy bloom,
Till the slow poison brought thy youth untimely to the tomb.

Thus wasted are the ranks of men—youth, health, and beauty fall;
The ruthless ruin spread around, and overwhelms us all.

Behold where, round thy narrow house, the graves unnumber'd lie;
The multitude that sleep below existed but to die.

Some, with the tottering steps of age, trod down the darksome way;
And some, in youth's lamented prime, like thee were torn away:

Yet these, however hard their fate, their native earth receives;
Amid their weeping friends they died, and fill their father's graves.

. . . . . .

(2) And while, amid the silent dead thy hapless fate I mourn,
My own long sorrows freshly bleed, and all my griefs return:

Like thee, cut off in early youth, and flower of beauty's pride,
My friend, my first and only joy, my much lov'd Stella died.

THE BARD AT INVERARY.

(STEWART, 1801.)

WHOE'ER he be that sojourns here,
I pity much his case,
Unless he come to wait upon
The Lord *their* God, "His Grace."

There's naething here but Highland pride,
And Highland scab and hunger:
If Providence has sent me here,
'Twas surely in an anger.

[The irritation of the poet is farther shewn by the only scrap of correspondence which has reached us, dated from one of the stages of his journey. It is addressed to his friend Ainslie, thus—"Arrochar, by Loch Long June 27, 1787.—I write you this on my tour thro' a country where savage streams tumble over savage mountains, thinly overspread with savage flocks, which starvingly support as savage inhabitants. My last stage was Inverary; to-morrow night's stage will be Dumbarton." It is understood that the bile of the poet was roused at Inverary, because, in consequence of the superabundance of guests or visitors at the Castle, several of these had to be accommodated at the Inn, and the landlord had no consideration to bestow on passing travellers like Burns. Perhaps he had announced himself, reckoning on the names of the Duke and Duchess of Argyle heading his subscription list, and was mortified to find that the bard's name was unknown in that locality. Dr. Grierson, who, Waddell says, accompanied Burns, gives the following as a copy of the verses on the window-pane of the inn at Inverary, which he says Burns wrote in his presence.

Whoe'er thou art that lodgest here,
  Heaven help thy woful case;
Unless thou com'st to visit Him,
  That King of Kings, his Grace.

There's Highland greed, there's Highland pride,
  There's Highland scab and hunger;
If Heaven it was that sent me here,
  It sent me in an anger.

If Dr. Grierson really accompanied Burns the latter version is probably given from memory, but the fact that Dr. G. is never again referred to and the strange loss of "the important series of letters" invest the whole story with an air of suspicion.—J. H.]

EPIGRAM TO MISS JEAN SCOTT.

(STEWART, 1801.)

O HAD each Scot of ancient times
  Been Jeanie Scott, as thou art;
The bravest heart on English ground
  Had yielded like a coward.

[This appears to be the proper place to introduce the above. She is designed "of Ayr." Nothing whatever is known regarding her, or the incident that called forth the compliment.]

ON THE DEATH OF JOHN M'LEOD, ESQ.,

BROTHER TO A YOUNG LADY, A PARTICULAR FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1793.)

SAD thy tale, thou idle page,
  And rueful thy alarms:
Death tears the brother of her love
  From Isabella's arms.

Sweetly deckt with pearly dew
  The morning rose may blow;
But cold successive noontide blasts
  May lay its beauties low.

Fair on Isabella's morn
  The sun propitious smil'd;
But, long ere noon, succeeding clouds
  Succeeding hopes beguil'd.

Fate oft tears the bosom chords
  That Nature finest strung;
So Isabella's heart was form'd,
  And so that heart was wrung.

Dread Omnipotence alone
  Can heal the wound he gave—
Can point the brimful care-worn eyes
  To scenes beyond the grave.

Virtue's blossoms there shall blow,
  And fear no withering blast;
There Isabella's spotless worth
  Shall happy be at last.

[A scroll-copy of this fine effusion, containing the following suppressed verse, and shewing sundry erasures and alterations, having fallen into Allan Cunningham's hands, he plumed himself on having recovered a fresh stanza, which he printed immediately before the last verse but one.

"Were it in the poet's power,
Strong as he shares the grief
That pierces Isabella's heart,
To give that heart relief,"

The reader, however, must perceive that the four lines rejected by the poet form an incompleted sentence, which would require to be carried into another stanza. This did not accord with the author's plan, and therefore he sacrificed the beautiful lines rather than spoil his poem, which is perfect without them.

Burns was on very intimate terms with Miss Isabella M'Leod, during his first winter-sojourn in Edinburgh. An elder sister of hers, Miss Flora M'Leod, had, in 1779, married Colonel James Mure-Campbell of Rowallan, who, in 1782, succeeded to the Earldom of Loudon. That lady, however, died on 3rd Sep. 1780, a few hours after giving birth to her only child, Flora, who became Countess of Loudon at the age of only six years, when her father died, in 1786. Through Mr. Gavin Hamilton, who was factor for the unfortunate Earl and the young Countess, Burns had been introduced to the M'Leod family. Dr. Johnson, in his tour in the Hebrides (1773), thus notices that household:—"The family of Raasay consists of the laird, the lady, three sons, and ten daughters. For the sons there is a tutor in the house, and the lady is said to be very skilful and diligent in the education of her girls. More gentleness of manners, or a more pleasing appearance of domestic society, is not to be found in the most polished countries."

Such is a sample of the society which received Burns on the footing of friendship in Edinburgh. He afterwards composed a song, "Raving winds around her blowing," referring to Isabella M'Leod's grief for the loss of family ties by death. Her brother John's death occurred on 20th July, 1787, while the poet was residing at Mossgiel, after his trip to Inverary, Loch Long, and Dumbarton, and possibly Greenock.]

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF SIR JAMES HUNTER BLAIR.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

"This performance is but mediocre, but my grief was sincere. The last time I saw the worthy, public-spirited man—a man he was! how few of the two-legged breed that pass for such, deserve the designation!—he pressed my hand, and asked me with the most friendly warmth if it was in his power to serve me; and if so, that I would oblige him by telling him how. I had nothing to ask of him; but if ever a child of his should be so unfortunate as to be under the necessity of asking anything of so poor a man as I am, it may not be in my power to grant it, but, by G— I shall try!"—*R. B. in Glenriddell MSS.*

THE lamp of day with ill-presaging glare,
  Dim, cloudy, sank beneath the western wave;
Th' inconstant blast howl'd thro' the darkening air,
  And hollow whistled in the rocky cave.

Lone as I wander'd by each cliff and dell,
  Once the lov'd haunts of Scotia's royal train;*
Or mus'd where limpid streams, once hallow'd, well,†
  Or mould'ring ruins mark the sacred fane.‡

Th' increasing blast roared round the beetling rocks,
  The clouds, swift-wing'd, flew o'er the starry sky,
The groaning trees untimely shed their locks,
  And shooting meteors caught the startled eye.

The paly moon rose in the livid east,
  And 'mong the cliffs disclos'd a stately form
In weeds of woe, that frantic beat her breast,
  And mix'd her wailings with the raving storm.

---

* The King's Park, at Holyrood House.—*R. B.*
† Saint Anthony's well.—*R. B.* ‡ St. Anthony's Chapel.—*R. B.*

Wild to my heart the filial pulses glow,
'Twas Caledonia's trophied shield I view'd:
Her form majestic droop'd in pensive woe,
The lightning of her eye in tears imbued.

Revers'd that spear, redoubtable in war,
Reclined that banner, erst in fields unfurl'd,
That like a deathful meteor gleam'd afar,
And brav'd the mighty monarchs of the world.

"My patriot son fills an untimely grave!"
With accents wild and lifted arms—she cried;
"Low lies the hand that oft was stretch'd to save,
Low lies the heart that swell'd with honest pride.

"A weeping country joins a widow's tear;
The helpless poor mix with the orphan's cry;
The drooping arts surround their patron's bier;
And grateful science heaves the heart-felt sigh!

"I saw my sons resume their ancient fire;
I saw fair Freedom's blossoms richly blow:
But ah! how hope is born but to expire!
Relentless fate has laid their guardian low.

"My patriot falls, but shall he lie unsung,
While empty greatness saves a worthless name!
No; every muse shall join her tuneful tongue,
And future ages hear his growing fame.

"And I will join a mother's tender cares,
Thro' future times to make his virtues last;
That distant years may boast of other Blairs!"—
She said, and vanished with the sweeping blast.

[Sir James Hunter Blair was Lord Provost of Edinburgh from Oct. 1784 to Oct. 1786, and "old Provost" in 1786–87. His death happened on 1st July 1787, while in the prime of life and usefulness; and it was with no venal feeling that Burns penned the above tribute to his memory. He forwarded a copy to his friend Mr. Robert Aiken of Ayr, with these words appended:—"My honored friend, the melancholy occasion of the foregoing poem affects not only individuals, but a country. That I have lost a friend is but repeating after Caledonia."]

TO MISS FERRIER,

ENCLOSING THE ELEGY ON SIR J. H. BLAIR.

(CHAMBERS, 1852.)

NAE heathen name shall I prefix,
  Frae Pindus or Parnassus;
Auld Reekie *dings* them a' to sticks,* beats
  For rhyme-inspiring lasses.

Jove's tunefu' dochters three times three
  Made Homer deep their debtor;
But, gien the body half an e'e,†
  Nine Ferriers *wad* done better! would have

Last day my mind was in a bog,
  Down George's Street I *stoited;* stumbled
A creeping *cauld* prosaic fog cold
  My very senses *doited.* benumbed

Do what I *dought* to set her free, could
  My *saul* lay in the mire; soul
Ye turned a *neuk*—I saw your *e'e*— corner eye
  She took the wing like fire!

---

*Edinburgh surpasses them all infinitely.—J. H.
†But given that Homer had had half an eye.—J. H.

The mournfu' sang I here enclose,
  In gratitude I send you,
And pray, in rhyme as weel as prose,
  A' gude things may attend you! all good

[The above off-hand lines were addressed to a sister of Miss Ferrier, the distinguished novelist, on the cover which enclosed a copy of the preceding poem. The original manuscript was long in the possession of Miss Grace Aiken, daughter of the Ayr patron of Burns. Mr. James Ferrier, W.S., father of these ladies, resided in George Street, Edinburgh, a few doors west of St. Andrew's Church. Chambers gives his name as "John," but we follow Lockhart, who refers to him as one of Sir Walter Scott's brethren at the Clerk's table in the Court of Session. The poet arrived in Edinburgh from Ayrshire on 7th August, and shortly thereafter finished his Elegy on the death of Blair.]

IMPROMPTU ON CARRON IRON WORKS.

(STEWART, 1801.)

WE *cam na* here to view your warks, came not
  In hopes to be mair wise,
But only, lest we *gang* to hell, go
  It may be nae surprise:
But when we *tirl'd* at your door rung
  Your porter *dought na* hear us; could not
Sae may, shou'd we to Hell's *yetts* come, gates
  Your *billy* Satan *sair* us! brother serve

[From the 7th of August, when the poet arrived in Edinburgh, after three months absence, to the 25th of that month, he lodged in the house of Mr. William Nicol, teacher; and with that gentleman he set out in a chaise, by way of Linlithgow, Falkirk, and Stirling, on a northern tour which lasted three weeks. The travellers zigzagged a little on the route between the two latter places, in hope of seeing the celebrated iron works of Carron; but the day being a Sunday, they were disappointed of admission. They consoled themselves with a rest at the Inn; and Burns, with his diamond pen, wrote the above lines on a window there.]

WRITTEN BY SOMEBODY ON THE WINDOW

OF AN INN AT STIRLING, ON SEEING THE ROYAL PALACE IN RUINS.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

HERE Stuarts once in glory reigned,
And laws for Scotland's weal ordained ;
But now unroof'd their palace stands,
Their sceptre's sway'd by other hands ;
Fallen indeed, and to the earth,
Whence grovelling reptiles take their birth.
The injured Stuart line is gone,
A race outlandish fills their throne ;
An idiot race, to honor lost ;
Who know them best despise them most.

[The travellers arrived at Stirling on Sunday 26th August. Next morning, the poet left Nicol there, and proceeded alone on horseback, to visit the relatives of his friend Gavin Hamilton, at Harvieston, several miles eastward on the Banks of the Devon. He returned to Stirling at night, and next day, the tour with Mr. Nicol was resumed.

The above lines therefore were in all probability inscribed on the Sunday evening. They soon gave rise to considerable public excitement, and were made the subject of animadversions in the newspapers, and elsewhere. A few months later, when he waited upon certain influential gentry in regard to his Excise scheme, this trifle was revived against him. In one of his letters to Clarinda in January 1788, he thus writes :—"I was questioned like a child about my matters, and blamed and schooled for my Inscription on the Stirling window." Clarinda in answer says—"I'm half glad you were school'd about the Inscription ; 'twill be a lesson, I hope, in future. Clarinda would have lectured you on it before, if she durst."

The quaint heading to our text is the poet's own in the Glenriddell copy, the fifth and sixth lines of which appear for the first time in the Edinburgh Edition published by Mr. Paterson. Lockhart remarks, that Burns must have composed these lines *after dinner;* and adds, that "the poetry, as well as

the sentiment, 'smells of the smith's shop.' The last couplet was indeed an outrage which no political prejudice could have made a gentleman approve."]

THE POET'S REPLY TO THE THREAT OF A CENSORIOUS CRITIC.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

My imprudent lines were answered, very petulantly, by *somebody*, I believe, a Rev. Mr Hamilton. In a MS., where I met the answer, I wrote below:—

With Esop's lion, Burns says, sore I feel
Each other blow, but d-mn that ass's heel!

[It was the Rev. Mr. Hamilton, minister of the parish of Gladsmuir in East Lothian, to whom Burns here refers. The Reverend gentleman came to Stirling shortly after the poet left and seeing the caustic lines on the window wrote the following sonnet by way of answer.

"Thus wretches rail whom sordid gain
Drags in Faction's gilded chain;
But can a mind which fame inspires,
Where genius lights her brightest fires—
Can Burns, disdaining truth and law,
Faction's venomed dagger draw;
And, skulking with a villain's aim,
Basely stab his monarch's fame?
Yes, Burns, 'tis o'er, thy race is run,
And shades receive thy setting sun:
With pain thy wayward fate I see,
And mourn the lot that's doomed for thee:
These few rash lines will damn thy name,
And blast thy hopes of future fame."—J. H.]

THE LIBELLER'S SELF-REPROOF.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

RASH mortal, and slanderous poet, thy name
Shall no longer appear in the records of Fame;
Dost not know that old Mansfield, who writes like the Bible,
Says, the more 'tis a truth, sir, the more 'tis a libel!

[Burns does not enter this in his own record of the affair, given in the two preceding articles: the authenticity of the lines is therefore very doubtful. They are probably Cunningham's own; for we are not aware that they were ever seen till he published them. His story concerning them is as follows:—The poet seems not to have been very sensible at the time of his imprudence; for some one said, "Burns, this will do you no good!—'I shall reprove myself,' he said, and wrote these aggravating words."

On a subsequent visit to Stirling with Dr. Adair, who furnished Dr. Currie with an account of the journey, his fellow-traveller thus refers to the Stirling inscription:—"The poet's indignation had vented itself in some imprudent, but not unpoetical lines, which had given much offence, and which he took this opportunity of erasing, by breaking the pane of the window at the inn on which they were written."]

VERSES WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL

OVER THE CHIMNEY-PIECE, IN THE PARLOR OF THE INN AT KENMORE, TAYMOUTH.*

(EDINBURGH ED., 1793.)

ADMIRING Nature in her wildest grace,
These northern scenes with weary feet I trace;
O'er many a winding dale and painful steep,
Th' abodes of covey'd grouse and timid sheep,
My savage journey, curious, I pursue,
Till fam'd Breadalbane opens to my view.—
The meeting cliffs each deep-sunk glen divides,
The woods, wild-scatter'd, clothe their ample sides;
Th' outstretching lake, imbosomed 'mong the hills,
The eye with wonder and amazement fills;
The Tay meand'ring sweet in infant pride,
The palace rising on his verdant side,
The lawns wood-fring'd in Nature's native taste,
The hillocks dropt in Nature's careless haste,

* Taymouth is the magnificent castle of the Earl of Breadalbane, next to the Duke of Argyle, the highest member of the clan Campbell. It is situated in the west of Perthshire, near the source of the Tay, amid grand Highland scenery. —J. H.

The Birks of Aberfeldy.

The arches striding o'er the new-born stream,
The village glittering in the noontide beam—

* * * * *

Poetic ardors in my bosom swell,
Lone wand'ring by the hermit's mossy cell;
The sweeping theatre of hanging woods,
Th' incessant roar of headlong tumbling floods—

* * * * *

Here Poesy might wake her heav'n-taught lyre,
And look through Nature with creative fire;
Here, to the wrongs of Fate half reconcil'd,
Misfortune's lighten'd steps might wander wild;
And Disappointment, in these lonely bounds,
Find balm to soothe her bitter rankling wounds:
Here heart-struck Grief might heav'nward stretch her scan,
And injur'd Worth forget and pardon man.

* * * * *

[The poet and Mr. Nicol arrived at this beautiful spot in the course of Wednesday, 29th August. The note in the Journal is simply "Taymouth—described in rhyme—meet the Hon. Charles Townshend." The truthfulness of Burns's description will be felt by all who know the locality.]

SONG—THE *BIRKS* OF ABERFELDY. Birches

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

Chor.—Bonie lassie, will ye go,
Will ye go, will ye go,
Bonie lassie, will ye go
To the birks of Aberfeldy!

Now Simmer blinks on flowery braes,
And o'er the crystal streamlets plays;
Come let us spend the lightsome days,
In the birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonie lassie, &c.

The little birdies blythely sing,
While o'er their heads the hazels *hing*, hang
Or lightly flit on wanton wing,
In the birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonie lassie, &c.

The *braes* ascend like lofty *wa's*, hills walls
The foamy stream deep-roaring *fa's*, falls
O'erhung wi' fragrant spreading *shaws*— woods
The birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonie lassie, &c.

The hoary cliffs are crown'd wi' flowers,
White o'er the linns the *burnie* pours, streamlet
And rising, weets wi' misty showers
The birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonie lassie, &c.

Let Fortune's gifts at random flee,
They ne'er shall draw a wish frae me;
Supremely blest wi' love and thee,
In the birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonie lassie, &c.

[The author's note in the Glenriddell volume is as follows:—"I composed these stanzas standing under the Falls of Moness, near Aberfeldy." From the journal of his Highland tour in 1787, we learn that this was on Thursday, 30th August. The beautiful air to which it was composed was printed by Playford, so early as in 1657, as a "Scotch Ayre." Burns's chorus corresponds entirely with that of the old song to which it was sung—"The birks of Abergeldy"—the words of which are quite in the nursery-style, thus—

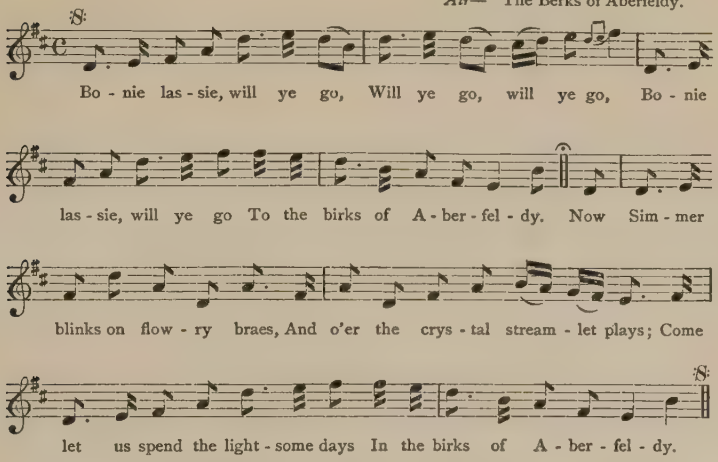
"Ye shall get a gown of silk, a gown of silk, a gown of silk,
Ye shall get a gown of silk, and coat of calimanco."

(Abergeldy (or rather Abergeldie) is on the river Dee in the Highlands of Aberdeenshire, and close to the royal residence, Balmoral. The estate is now the property of the Prince of Wales. The birches along the Deeside there are of exquisite

beauty. Burns robbed Abergeldie of its musical treasure and conferred it on Aberfeldy, in Perthshire. He never saw Abergeldie else he would not have despoiled it.—J. H.)

We subjoin the melody from the *Museum*. Be it remarked, however, that Burns's lyric sings charmingly as a Duet, when the contralto is taken by a male voice of fine quality.]

Air—"The Berks of Aberfeldy."



THE HUMBLE PETITION OF BRUAR WATER.

TO THE NOBLE DUKE OF ATHOLE.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1793.)

My lord, I know, your noble ear
  Woe ne'er assails in vain;
Embolden'd thus, I beg you'll hear
  Your humble slave complain,
How saucy Phœbus' scorching beams,
  In flaming summer-pride,
Dry-withering, waste my foamy streams,
  And drink my crystal tide.*

---

*Bruar Falls, in Athole, are exceedingly picturesque and beautiful; but their effect is much impaired by the want of trees and shrubs.—*R. B.*

The lightly-jumpin, *glowrin* trouts, open-eyed
  That thro' my waters play,
If, in their random, wanton spouts,
  They near the margin stray ;
If, hapless chance ! they linger lang,
  I'm scorching up so shallow,
They're left the whitening *stanes* amang, stones
  In gasping death to wallow.

Last day I *grat* wi' spite and *teen*, wept vexation
  As poet Burns came by,
That, to a bard, I should be seen
  Wi' half my channel dry ;
A panegyric rhyme, I ween,
  Ev'n as I was, he *shor'd* me ; gave
But had I in my glory been,
  He, kneeling, *wad* ador'd me. would have

Here, foaming down the *skelvy* rocks, shelving
  In twisting strength I *rin;* run
There, high my boiling torrent smokes,
  Wild-roaring o'er a *linn:* cascade
Enjoying large each spring and well,
  As Nature gave them me,
I am, altho' I say't mysel,
  Worth *gaun* a mile to see. going

Would then my noble master please
  To grant my highest wishes,
He'll shade my banks wi' tow'ring trees,
  And bonie spreading bushes.
Delighted doubly then, my lord,
  You'll wander on my banks,
And listen *mony* a grateful bird many
  Return you tuneful thanks.

The sober *lav'rock*, warbling wild, lark
  Shall to the skies aspire;
The *gowdspink*, Music's gayest child, goldfinch
  Shall sweetly join the choir;
The blackbird strong, the *lintwhite* clear, linnet
  The *mavis* mild and mellow; thrush
The robin pensive Autumn cheer,
  In all her locks of yellow.

This too, a covert shall ensure,
  To shield them from the storm;
And coward *maukin* sleep secure, hare
  Low in her grassy form:
Here shall the shepherd make his seat,
  To weave his crown of flow'rs;
Or find a shelt'ring, safe retreat,
  From prone-descending show'rs.

And here, by sweet, endearing stealth,
  Shall meet the loving pair,
Despising worlds, with all their wealth,
  As empty idle care;
The flow'rs shall vie in all their charms,
  The hour of heav'n to grace;
And *birks* extend their fragrant arms birches
  To screen the dear embrace.

Here haply too, at vernal dawn,
  Some musing bard may stray,
And eye the smoking, dewy lawn,
  And misty mountain grey;
Or, by the reaper's nightly beam,*
  Mild-chequering thro' the trees,
Rave to my darkly dashing stream,
  Hoarse swelling on the breeze.

* The harvest-moon.

Let lofty firs, and ashes cool,
  My lowly banks o'erspread,
And view, deep-bending in the pool,
  Their shadows' wat'ry-bed :
Let fragrant birks, in woodbines drest,
  My craggy cliffs adorn ;
And, for the little songster's nest,
  The close embow'ring thorn.

So may, old Scotia's darling hope,
  Your little angel band *
Spring, like their fathers, up to prop
  Their honor'd native land !
So may, thro' Albion's farthest ken,
  To social-flowing glasses,
The grace be—"Athole's honest men,
  And Athole's bonie lasses !"

[In the spring of this year, the poet had met, at the house of Dr. Blacklock, a young man of aspiring literary tastes, named Josiah Walker, then a tutor to the family of the Duke of Athole, and subsequently professor of Latin in the University of Glasgow. Burns, in the course of his tour with Mr. Nicol, stopped at Blair-Athole, after a ride up the Tummel, on the evening of Friday, 31st August. The entry in his Journal is : "Sup with the Duchess —easy and happy from the manners of the family—confirmed in my good opinion of my friend Walker." It was happily arranged that Mr. Nicol should be temptingly engaged at his favorite amusement of fishing, while the poet was prevailed on to spend two days with the Duke's family, and the visitors who then happened to be at Blair. The Saturday and Sunday (1st and 2nd September) which Burns passed there, he afterwards declared were the happiest days in his life. The poem which forms the text is inserted in the Glenriddell MSS. and the following note is appended in the poet's autograph :—"God, who knows all things, knows how my heart aches with the throes of gratitude, whenever I recollect my reception at the noble house of Athole."

The poem in the text was rapidly composed ; for, two days after leaving Blair, the author enclosed it in a letter to Mr.

* The young family of the Duke and Duchess of Athole.

Walker from Inverness, (5th Sep.) with these remarks,—"I have just time to write the foregoing, and to tell you that it was, at least the most part of it, the effusion of a half hour I spent at Bruar. I do not mean it was *extempore*, for I have endeavored to brush it up as well as Mr. Nicol's chat and the jogging of the chaise would allow."

LINES ON THE FALL OF FYERS,

NEAR LOCH-NESS.

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL ON THE SPOT.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1793.)

AMONG the heathy hills and ragged woods
The roaring Fyers pours his mossy floods;
Till full he dashes on the rocky mounds,
Where, thro' a shapeless breach, his stream resounds.
As high in air the bursting torrents flow,
As deep recoiling surges foam below,
Prone down the rock the whitening sheet descends,
And viewless Echo's ear, astonished, rends.
Dim-seen, through rising mists and ceaseless show'rs,
The hoary cavern, wide surrounding low'rs:
Still thro' the gap the struggling river toils,
And still, below, the horrid caldron boils—

* * * * *

[The poet visited this grand spectacle on Wednesday, 5th September. After returning from his drive to the Falls, he dined by appointment with William Inglis, Esq., afterwards Provost of Inverness, who had a party to meet him. It is remembered that, although he spoke rapturously of the Highland scenery, he seemed in rather a silent and thoughtful mood throughout the evening.

Professor John Wilson produced a prose description of the scene sketched by Burns in the foregoing vigorous couplets, from which we make the following extract:—"That cataract, if descending on a cathedral, would shatter down the pile into a million fragments. But it meets the black foundations of the cliff, and flies up to the starless heaven in a storm of spray. . . . The very solid

globe of earth quakes through her entrails.... Has some hill-loch burst its barrier? For, what a world of waters comes now tumbling into the abyss! Niagara! hast thou a fiercer roar? Listen, and you think there are momentary pauses of the thunder, filled up with goblin groans! All the military music bands of the army of Britain would here be dumb as mutes—trumpet, cymbal, and the great drum!"

The eloquent writer of the above passage criticises Burns's talent for description, thus:—"Seldom setting himself to describe visual objects, but when he is under strong emotion, he seems to have taken considerable pains when he did, to produce something striking; and though he never fails on such occasions to do so, yet he is sometimes ambitious over much, and, though never feeble, becomes bombastic, as in his lines on the Fall of Fyers:

'And viewless Echo's ear astonished rends.'"

We humbly think that the beautiful idea presented in that line does not "overstep the modesty of Nature," under the circumstances. The one line of Burns suggests all that Christopher North so well, but so elaborately, said in his four columns of Blackwood.]

EPIGRAM ON PARTING WITH A KIND HOST IN THE HIGHLANDS.

(Stewart, 1801.)

When Death's dark stream I ferry o'er,
(A time that surely shall come),
In Heav'n itself I'll ask no more,
Than just a Highland welcome.

[More than one stage in the poet's Highland Tour must have presented occasion for grateful expressions like these. Immediately on leaving Inverness, his Journal records as follows:—"Thursday [6th September] Come over Culloden Muir—reflections on the field of battle—Breakfast at Kilraick (Kilravock), old Mrs. Rose, sterling sense, warm heart, strong passions, and honest pride, all in uncommon degree. Mrs. Rose, jun., a little milder than the mother. .... Mrs. Rose and Mr. Grant accompany us to Kildrummie—two young ladies—Miss Ross, who sang two Gaelic songs, beautiful and lovely—Miss Sophie Brodie, not very beautiful, but most agree-

able and amiable—both of them the gentlest, the mildest, sweetest creatures on earth—happiness be with them!"

We introduce the above extract from the poet's Journal to show how his passion for "Morag" and other Gaelic airs took root. Immediately thereafter, he is found composing words for Highland melodies which appeared in Johnson's second volume, issued in February 1788. These we shall present in their probable order.]

STRATHALLAN'S LAMENT.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

THICKEST night, surround my dwelling!
  Howling tempests, o'er me rave!
Turbid torrents, wintry swelling,
  Roaring by my lonely cave!
Crystal streamlets gently flowing,
  Busy haunts of base mankind,
Western breezes softly blowing,
  Suit not my distracted mind.

In the cause of Right engagèd,
  Wrongs injurious to redress,
Honor's war we strongly wagèd,
  But the heavens deny'd success.
Ruin's wheel has driven o'er us,
  Not a hope that dare attend,
The wide world is all before us—
  But a world without a friend.

[In his notes furnished for Mr. Riddell, the poet states that his friend, Allan Masterton, who was a musical amateur, as well as a teacher of writing in Edinburgh, composed the air to which these verses are set in the *Museum*. "As he and I (he adds) were both sprouts of Jacobitism, we agreed to dedicate the words and air to that cause. But to tell the matter of fact, except when my passions were heated by some accidental cause, my Jacobitism was merely by way of *vive la bagatelle*."*

* This unsubstantial, sentimental kind of Jacobitism was widely prevalent in Scotland, even in the Lowlands, for long after Burns's day. Robert Chambers

The date of this Lament may be inferred from a marginal marking on the poet's manuscript, now in the British Museum. In connection with the fifth line—"Crystal streamlets gently flowing," he places this note:—"(A suggestion merely,)

> Streams, the pride of orient plains,
> Never bound in Winter's chains."

That couplet he accordingly made use of in his poem on "Castle Gordon," which subject was presented at a later stage of his Highland tour. He passed through Strathallan on the same day he left Stirling. The words are supposed to be descriptive of the feelings of James Drummond, Viscount of Strathallan, who, after his father's death at Culloden, escaped with several of his countrymen to France, where he died.

A first draft of the MS. of this song, communicated by Henry Probasco, Esq., of Cincinnati, Ohio, shews a vast difference in some passages. It begins, "Thickest darkness shrouds," and the second stanza reads thus:—

> Farewell fleeting, fickle treasure,
> Between Mishap and Folly shared!
> Farewell Peace, and farewell Pleasure!
> Farewell flattering Man's regard!
>
> Ruin's wheel has driven o'er me,
> Nor dare a hope my fate attend;
> The wide world is all before me,
> But a world without a friend.

CASTLE GORDON.*

(Currie, 1800.)

Streams that glide in orient plains,
Never bound by Winter's chains;
Glowing here on golden sands,
There immixed with foulest stains
From Tyranny's empurpled hands;

---

shared in it. It may be referred to three causes: (1) The Stuart family were more directly associated with Scotland than the Hanoverian line: (2) Sympathy for a lost cause which had been specially championed by Scotchmen: (3) The grand Jacobite melodies and songs which were sung everywhere, and continue to be sung to this day. This last was the weightiest.—J. H.

*Castle Gordon, or, as it is commonly named, Gordon Castle, is the noble seat of the Dukes of Gordon (now represented by the Duke of Richmond and Gordon), situated on the Morayshire bank of the river Spey, near its embouchure, and close to the village of Fochabers.—J. H.

These, their richly gleaming waves,
I leave to tyrants and their slaves;
Give me the stream * that sweetly laves
The banks by Castle Gordon.

Spicy forests, ever gay,
Shading from the burning ray
Hapless wretches sold to toil;
Or the ruthless native's way,
Bent on slaughter, blood, and spoil:
Woods that ever verdant wave,
I leave the tyrant and the slave;
Give me the groves that lofty brave
The storms, by Castle Gordon.

Wildly here without control,
Nature reigns and rules the whole;
In that sober pensive mood,
Dearest to the feeling soul,
She plants the forest, pours the flood:
Life's poor day I'll musing rave,
And find at night a sheltering cave,
Where waters flow and wild woods wave,
By bonie Castle Gordon.

(These elegant verses were composed in gratitude for the kind reception with which the poet was greeted on his arrival at Gordon Castle, on Friday, 7th September, where he was entertained to dinner, and earnestly invited to remain for a time. On explaining to the Duke that he had left a friend (Nicol) at the inn whom he could not desert, His Grace insisted he should bring him to the Castle also. Burns reached the inn only in time to prevent his unreasonable companion, who was irritated at being left so long alone, from starting on the remainder of the journey without him. Nicol had already ordered the carriage out, and Burns reluctantly entered it and was driven off with him.—J. H.)

[It is impossible to say how soon after his visit the poet began to compose the verses which form the text. At the close of the

* The Spey.—J. H.

following month, Mr. Hoy, a resident clergyman at Gordon Castle, to whom he had enclosed the piece, writes thus regarding it:—"Your song I shewed without producing the author; and it was judged by the Duchess to be the production of Dr. Beattie. I sent a copy of it, by her Grace's desire, to a Mrs. M'Pherson, in Badenoch, who sings, 'Morag,' and all other Gaelic songs, in great perfection. . . . When the Duchess was informed that you were the author, she wished you had written the verses in Scotch."

Burns, on becoming master of the tune, within a short period produced a song with a sprinkling of Scotch words, on the same subject, which fits the melody entirely. It is entitled "The Young Highland Rover."

Our text has been improved by collation with a MS. belonging to A. Ireland, Esq., Inglewood, Bowden, Cheshire.]

SONG—LADY ONLIE, HONEST LUCKY.

Tune—"The Ruffian's Rant."

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, Feb. 1788.)

A' the lads o' Thorniebank,
When they *gae* to the shore o' Buckie, go
They'll step in an' tak a pint
Wi' Lady Onlie, honest *lucky*. goodwife

Chorus.—Lady Onlie, honest lucky,
Brews gude ale at shore o' Buckie;
I wish her sale for her gude ale,
The best on a' the shore o' Buckie.

Her house sae *bien*, her *curch* sae clean comfortable / head-covering
I *wat* she is a dainty *chuckie;* wot brood hen (*matron*)
And cheery blinks the *ingle-gleede* glowing fire
O' Lady Onlie, honest Lucky. of
Lady Onlie, &c.

[This song seems to have been a mere *impromptu*, inspired at Buckie, a large fishing village, or small town, on the coast between

Fochabers and Cullen, at which latter place Burns slept on the night of the 7th September on his way to Banff and Aberdeen.—J. H.]

THENIEL MENZIES' BONIE MARY.

Air—"The Ruffian's Rant," or *Roy's Wife.*

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

IN comin by the brig o' Dye,
At Darlet we a *blink* did tarry; moment
As day was *dawin* in the sky, dawning
We drank a health to bonie Mary.

Chorus.—Theniel Menzies' bonie Mary,
Theniel Menzies' bonie Mary,
Charlie Grigor *tint* his plaidie, lost
Kissin' Theniel's bonie Mary.

Her een sae bright, her brow sae white,
Her *haffet locks* as brown's a berry; ringlets
And ay they dimpl't wi' a smile,
The rosy cheeks o' bonie Mary.
Theniel Menzies' bonie Mary, &c.

We *lap* an' danc'd the *lee-lang* day, leapt live-long
Till piper lads were *wae* and weary; spiritless
But Charlie gat the *spring* to pay, music
For kissin Theniel's bonie Mary.
Theniel Menzies' bonie Mary, &c.

[Revision of an old song, a copy of which appeared first in print in a very early number of the Aberdeen Magazine. This is one of the songs introduced into Johnson's second volume. It is especially praised by Lockhart as being far superior to either the "Banks of the Devon," or the "Streams that glide on orient plains," written in celebration of *Castle Gordon*. The following note appears in Hogg & Motherwell's edition: "I remember to have seen many years ago a copy of this song, in a very old Aberdeen Magazine,

said to be by a gentleman of that city. The oldest (form) on record is, however, the following from recitation, and never in print.

In Scotland braid and far awa',
Where lasses painted, *busk* sae braw, dress
A bonnier lass I never saw,
Than Thenie Menzie's bonny Mary.

CHORUS.

Thenie Menzie's bonny Mary,
Thenie Menzie's bonny Mary;
A' the warld would I gie,
For a kiss o' Thenie's bonny Mary.

The Miser's joy and *gowden* bliss, golden
I never kent, nor sought to guess;
I'm rich when I hae taen a kiss
O' Thenie Menzie's bonny Mary.
Thenie Menzie's, &c.

Some *dozen'd* loons sit *douf* and cauld, stupefied feelingless
And they hae liv'd till they've grown auld,
Scarce ever kent they had a saul,
Till they saw Thenie's bonny Mary.
Thenie Menzie's, &c.—J. H.]

THE BONIE LASS OF ALBANY.

Tune—"Mary's Dream."

(CHAMBERS, 1852.)

MY heart is wae and *unco wae*, very sorrowful
To think upon the raging sea,
That roars between her gardens green
An' the bonie Lass of Albany.

This lovely maid's of royal blood
That rulèd Albion's kingdoms three,
But oh, alas! for her bonie face,
They've *wrang'd* the Lass of Albany. wronged

In the rolling tide of spreading Clyde
  There sits an isle of high degree,
And a town of fame whose princely name
  Should grace the Lass of Albany.*

But there's a youth, a witless youth,†
  That fills the place where she should be;
We'll send him o'er to his native shore,
  And bring our *ain* sweet Albany. own

Alas the day, and woe the day,
  A false usurper *wan the gree*, won the supremacy
Who now commands the towers and lands—
  The royal right of Albany.

We'll daily pray, we'll nightly pray,
  On bended knees most fervently,
The time may come, with pipe an' drum
  We'll welcome hame fair Albany.

[Burns and his Jacobite friend Nicol arrived in Edinburgh, after their tour of twenty-two days, on Sunday, 16th September. While on their route, the newspapers had announced the fact that Prince Charles Stuart (the Pretender) who had no legitimate issue, had made a formal declaration of his marriage with Clementina Walkinshaw, who had borne him a daughter. This hitherto regarded natural daughter of the Prince was styled "Duchess of Albany," and she was by the Parliament of Paris legitimated by a deed registered September 6, 1787.

It is very probable that the foregoing verses in the old ballad style were spun by the poet at this period. That the piece is authentic is placed beyond all doubt by the fact that Burns inserted it in a manuscript book, now or lately possessed by Mr. B. Nightingale of London. It is entered immediately after the "Stirling Inscription," and headed "A SONG BY THE SAME HAND."

The Prince, at his death in 1788, left a settlement constituting the Duchess of Albany his sole heir; but she did not long survive him.]

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*The Isle of Bute, and its county town Rothesay, which gave the title Duke of Rothesay to the eldest sons of the Kings of Scotland.—J. H.

†George IV., Prince of Wales.—J. H.

ON SCARING SOME WATER-FOWL

IN LOCH-TURIT.

A WILD SCENE AMONG THE HILLS OF OCHTERTYRE.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1793.)

"This was the production of a solitary forenoon's walk from Ochtertyre House. I lived there, the guest of Sir William Murray, for two or three weeks, and was much flattered by my hospitable reception. What a pity that the mere emotions of gratitude are so impotent in this world! 'Tis lucky that, as we are told, they will be of some avail in the world to come."—*R. B., Glenriddell MSS.*

WHY, ye tenants of the lake,
For me your wat'ry haunt forsake?
Tell me, fellow-creatures, why
At my presence thus you fly?
Why disturb your social joys,
Parent, filial, kindred ties?—
Common friend to you and me,
Nature's gifts to all are free:
Peaceful keep your dimpling wave,
Busy feed, or wanton lave;
Or, beneath the sheltering rock,
Bide the surging billow's shock.

Conscious, blushing for our race,
Soon, too soon, your fears I trace.
Man, your proud usurping foe,
Would be lord of all below:
Plumes himself in freedom's pride,
Tyrant stern to all beside.

The eagle, from the cliffy brow,
Marking you his prey below,
In his breast no pity dwells,
Strong necessity compels:
But Man, to whom alone is giv'n
A ray direct from pitying Heav'n,
Glories in his heart humane—
And creatures for his pleasure slain!

In these savage, liquid plains,
Only known to wand'ring swains,
Where the mossy riv'let strays,
Far from human haunts and ways;
All on Nature you depend,
And life's poor season peaceful spend.

Or, if man's superior might
Dare invade your native right,
On the lofty ether borne,
Man with all his pow'rs you scorn;
Swiftly seek, on clanging wings,
Other lakes and other springs;
And the foe you cannot brave,
Scorn at least to be his slave.

[When Burns arrived in Edinburgh after his northern tour, he found a letter from Mr. Walker lying for him, dated 13th September, reminding him of his promise to pay a visit to Sir William Murray at Ochtertyre. Accordingly, in the company of Dr. Adair, he proceeded to Stirling and Harvieston early in October. On the 15th of that month, he wrote from Sir William Murray's house at Ochtertyre, intimating that he had been storm-stayed at Harvieston for two days, and had visited Mr. Ramsay of Ochtertyre on Teith.

The beautiful lines in the text have been frequently quoted as illustrative of Burns's tender sympathy with the lower animals. Loch Turit (the natives pronounce it "Turrit") is in the midst of a wild valley among the hills behind Ochtertyre House. Chambers expresses his opinion "that Burns did not ride across the Muir of Orchil merely to spend a few luxurious days in aristocratic society,

Cabrini College Library

still less to view scenery which he had passed over so lately as August" preceding. He explains that Sir William Murray was cousin to Mr. Graham of Fintry, a Commissioner of Excise, whom the poet had met at Blair, and suggests that the Excise scheme was chiefly in his eye when he undertook that October journey.]

BLYTHE WAS SHE.

Tune—"Andro and his Cutty Gun."

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

Chorus.—*Blythe*, blythe and merry was she, cheerful
Blythe was she *but* and *ben;* kitchen parlor
Blythe by the banks of Earn,*
And blythe in Glenturit glen.*

By Ochtertyre grows the aik,
On Yarrow banks the *birken shaw;* birch wood
But Phemie was a bonier lass
Than braes o' Yarrow ever saw.
Blythe, blythe, &c.

Her looks were like a flow'r in May,
Her smile was like a simmer morn:
She trippèd by the banks o' Earn,
As light's a bird upon a thorn.
Blythe, blythe, &c.

Her bonie face it was as meek
As ony lamb upon a lea;
The evening sun was ne'er sae sweet,
As was the blink o' Phemie's e'e.
Blythe, blythe, &c.

* A stream and glen in Perthshire.—J. H.

Euphemia Murray.

(THE FLOWER OF STRATHMORE)

The Highland hills I've wander'd wide,
As o'er the Lawlands, I hae been;
But Phemie was the blythest lass
That ever trode the dewy green.
Blythe, blythe, &c.

[The subject of this sweet lyric was Miss Euphemia Murray of Lintrose, a cousin of Sir William Murray of Ochtertyre, and then about eighteen years old. She was subsequently married to Mr. Smythe, of Methven, one of the judges of the Court of Session. Even at that early age, she had acquired celebrity in the district for her beauty, and was called "The Flower of Strathmore." Mrs. Smythe in after-life mentioned to a friend that she "remembered of Burns reciting the poem on Scaring the Wildfowl, one evening after supper, and that he pronounced the concluding lines with great energy."

The melody of this song is thoroughly Scotch, and has supplied the materials for many modern tunes which pass as original. Most of the verses that have been set to it are Bacchanalian in character. Burns preferred to hear it tenderly executed in slower time.]

A ROSE-BUD BY MY EARLY WALK.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

A ROSE-BUD by my early walk,
Adown a corn-inclosèd *bawk.**
Sae gently bent its thorny stalk,
All on a dewy morning.
Ere twice the shades o' dawn are fled,
In a' its' crimson glory spread,
And drooping rich the dewy head,
It scents the early morning.

Within the bush her cover'd nest
A little linnet fondly prest;
The dew sat chilly on her breast,
Sae early in the morning.

* A ridge left untilled in a field of oats and used as a path-way.—J. H.

She soon shall see her tender brood,
The pride, the pleasure o' the wood,
Amang the fresh green leaves bedew'd,
Awake the early morning.

So thou, dear bird, young Jeany fair,
On trembling string or vocal air,
Shall sweetly pay the tender care
That *tents* thy early morning. watches over
So thou, sweet Rose-bud, young and gay,
Shalt beauteous blaze upon the day,
And bless the parent's evening ray
That watch'd thy early morning.

[When Burns returned from his Highland tour in the middle of September, he seems, as by previous arrangement, to have domesticated himself in the house of Mr. Wm. Cruikshank, a fellow-teacher with Mr. Nicol, in the High School of Edinburgh. On 20th October, he came back from Ochtertyre and the banks of the Devon with a cold contracted in the latter stages of his journey, which confined him pretty closely to the house for some days. His time was chiefly occupied in composing songs for the second volume of the *Museum*, and hearing Miss Cruikshank play the melodies on the pianoforte. Professor Walker thus refers to this matter:—"About the end of October I called for him at the house of a friend whose daughter, though not more than twelve, was a considerable proficient in music. I found him seated by the harpsichord of this young lady, listening with the keenest interest to his own verses, which she sung and accompanied, and adjusting them to the music by repeated trials of the effect. In this occupation he was so totally absorbed, that it was difficult to draw his attention from it for a moment."

That Burns was himself much pleased with the song which forms our text, is very evident from the fact that he distributed copies very freely; and, among others of his friends, he sent a copy to his early acquaintance, David Sillar, of Irvine, who set it to a melody of his own composing. We fear that "Davie" was no better a musician than poet: his tune is printed with "The Rose-bud" in Johnson's second volume, and it seems but a poor affair. There can be little doubt that "Lock Errochside" was the melody by which Burns was inspired when he composed the song, and it fits that air charmingly. It is now usually adapted to a good old air called "The Shepherd's wife."

Among others who obtained a copy of this song in manuscript, was the celebrated Mrs. Alison Cockburn, who thus refers to it in one of her letters:—"Are you fond of poetry? Do you know Burns? I am to get a very pretty little thing he calls 'The Rosebud,' maybe I'll send it to you next week."]

EPITAPH FOR MR. W. CRUICKSHANK.

(HOGG AND MOTHERWELL, 1845.)

HONEST Will to Heaven's away,
And mony shall lament him;
His fau'ts they a' in Latin lay,
In English *nane* e'er *kent* them. none knew

[Burns was much addicted to this method of complimenting his friends; and the present epigram is a good companion to the one he had paid to Nicol (given at p. 87, *supra.*) Mr. Cruickshank was one of the Classical masters of the High School of Edinburgh, from September 1770 till his death, which happened on 8th March 1795.

Mr. Cruickshank's house, where Burns lodged from 16th September 1787, to 18th February 1788, was in James' Square, top flat of the common stair, No. 30, and the window of the poet's room looked from the gable-end into the green plot behind the Register House.]

SONG—THE BANKS OF THE DEVON.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

These verses were composed on a charming girl, Miss Charlotte Hamilton, who is now (1793) married to James M'Kitrick Adair, Esq., physician. She is sister to my worthy friend, Gavin Hamilton of Mauchline, and was born on the banks of Ayr; but was, at the time I wrote these lines, residing at Harvieston in Clackmannanshire, on the romantic banks of the little river Devon.—*R. B., Glenriddell Notes.*

How pleasant the banks of the clear winding Devon,
With green spreading bushes and flow'rs blooming fair!

But the boniest flow'r on the banks of the Devon
  Was once a sweet bud on the braes of the Ayr.
Mild be the sun on this sweet blushing flower,
  In the gay rosy morn, as it bathes in the dew;
And gentle the fall of the soft vernal shower,
  That steals on the evening each leaf to renew!

O spare the dear blossom, ye orient breezes,
  With chill hoary wing as ye usher the dawn;
And far be thou distant, thou reptile that seizes
  The verdure and pride of the garden or lawn!
Let Bourbon exult in his gay gilded lilies,
  And England triumphant display her proud rose:
A fairer than either adorns the green vallies,
  Where Devon, sweet Devon, meandering flows.

[The reader will note that the poet paid a visit to Harvieston on Monday, 27th August, and again, on two different occasions, within two months thereafter. He gave an account of the first of those visits, in a letter to Mr. Gavin Hamilton, in which he writes very warmly of Charlotte's beauty. At the period of the two latter visits, Miss Margaret Chalmers, a cousin of Charlotte, was also residing at Harvieston. Burns had been introduced to Miss Chalmers in Edinburgh, and she afterwards was one of his most cherished confidantes and correspondents. Writing to her on September 26th 1787, he says:—"I am determined to pay Charlotte a poetic compliment, if I could hit on some glorious old Scotch air. You will see a small attempt on a shred of paper inclosed; but though Dr. Blacklock commended it very highly, I am not just satisfied with it myself. . . . . You and Charlotte have given me pleasure—permanent pleasure 'which the world cannot give nor take away,' and which I hope will outlast the heavens and the earth." In a later letter he writes:—"Talking of Charlotte, I have, to the best of my power, paid her a poetic compliment now completed. . . . I won't say the poetry is first-rate, though I am convinced it is very well; and, what is not always the case with compliments to ladies, it is not only sincere, but just."

Both Lockhart and Chambers have remarked that this song "is somewhat singular as a compliment to a handsome woman, in which he did not assume the character of a lover." The tune selected by Burns for these words was a Gaelic one which he

first heard sung by a lady near Inverness,* and got the notes taken down for the *Museum*, where it is printed under the title, "Bannerach dhon a chri."

BRAVING ANGRY WINTER'S STORMS.

Tune—"Neil Gow's Lament for Abercairny."

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

WHERE, braving angry winter's storms,
The lofty Ochils † rise,
Far in their shade my Peggy's charms
First blest my wondering eyes;
As one who by some savage stream
A lonely gem surveys,
Astonish'd, doubly marks it beam
With art's most polish'd blaze.

Blest be the wild, sequester'd shade,
And blest the day and hour,
Where Peggy's charms I first survey'd,
When first I felt their pow'r!
The tyrant Death, with grim control,
May seize my fleeting breath;
But tearing Peggy from my soul
Must be a stronger death.

[The subject of this lyric was Margaret Chalmers, who, about a year after it was composed, became the wife of Lewis Hay, Esq., Banker in Edinburgh. She became a widow within four

* Miss Rose of Kilravock.—J. H.

† The Ochils are a range of hills of only moderate height (though called by the poet "lofty") twenty-four miles in length, running from the vicinity of Stirling to the Firth of Tay, through the counties of Perth, Clackmannan, Stirling, Kinross, and Fife. The highest peak is Bencleuch, rising to 2,352 feet. Harvieston lies at their southern base. It may interest the reader to know that the late Rev. Dr. Archibald Campbell Tait, Archbishop of Canterbury, was of the Harvieston family, and therefore a connection of the heroine of this song. —J. H.

years after the death of Burns. Her father, Mr. Chalmers of Fingland, in Dumfriesshire, sold his estate there, and took a farm near Mauchline where Peggy Chalmers was brought up. Her mother was a sister of Gavin Hamilton's stepmother, and also a sister of Mrs. Tait of Harvieston. Mrs. Chalmers had left Ayrshire in consequence of her husband's death, and resided in Edinburgh when Burns arrived there. The poet, however, had not advanced far in acquaintance with Miss Chalmers, until he met her at Harvieston in October 1787. To this he particularly refers in the above song; the fact being, as he states in one of his letters, that he was then "storm-stayed at the foot of the Ochil Hills, with Mr. Tait of Harvieston." It seems pretty evident that if ever Burns thought of being married to an "Edinburgh Belle," Peggy Chalmers was the one his heart was set upon. Thomas Campbell, the poet, who was a familiar visitor of Mrs. Lewis Hay, during her widowhood, averred that she had admitted to him that Burns made her a serious proposal of marriage.

The poet's letters to Miss Chalmers—mere fragments as they are—have always been reckoned among his best. Lockhart says that "with exception of his letters to Mrs. Dunlop, there is perhaps no part of his correspondence which may be quoted so uniformly to his honor." Chambers observes that these letters, "affecting the tone of friendship, are ever liable to verge towards gallantry." Writing on the subject of this and the following song, Burns says to Miss Chalmers, "I have complimented you chiefly, almost solely, on your mental charms. Shall I be plain with you? I will. Personal attractions, madam, you have much above par—wit, understanding, and worth, you possess in the first class."

She was a great favorite of Dr. Blacklock, who liked her for the softness of her voice—"an excellent thing in woman"—and one who knew her well has recorded the observation that "her gentleness and vivacity had a favorable influence on the manners of Burns, who always appeared to advantage in her presence."]

SONG—MY PEGGY'S CHARMS.

(Currie, 1800.)

My Peggy's face, my Peggy's form,
The frost of hermit Age might warm;
My Peggy's worth, my Peggy's mind,
Might charm the first of human kind.

Burns and Peggy Chalmers at Harvieston

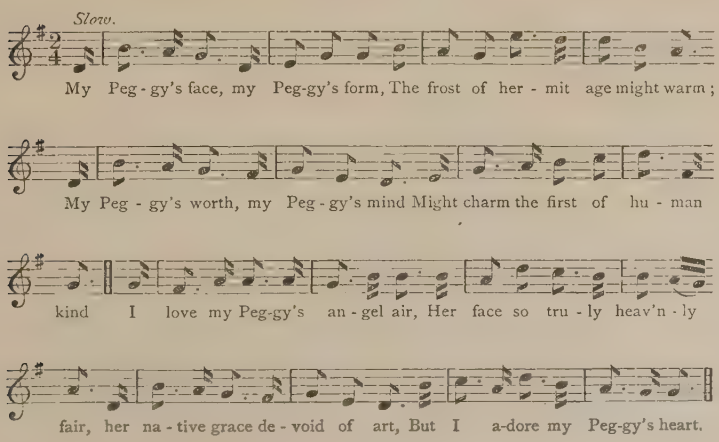
"MY DEARIE'S FACE MY PEGGY'S FORM
— — — —

I love my Peggy's angel air,
Her face so truly heavenly fair,
Her native grace, so void of art,
But I adore my Peggy's heart.

The lily's hue, the rose's dye,
The kindling lustre of an eye;
Who but owns their magic sway?
Who but knows they all decay!

The tender thrill, the pitying tear,
The generous purpose nobly dear,
The gentle look that rage disarms—
These are all Immortal charms.

[This other poetic tribute to the "Immortal charms" of Peggy Chalmers, was intended to appear along with the one immediately preceding, in Johnson's second volume; but the Gaelic tune selected for it ("Ha a chaillich air mo Dheith") seems to have been pronounced unsuitable. The song accordingly was not included in Johnson's collection till many years after the poet's death, when Wm. Clark (son of the deceased friend of Burns) set it for the sixth volume, to the Highland air referred to. Instead of reproducing the Gaelic tune, which does not echo the sentiment of the song, we present the reader with the following simple Scots melody, which is faultless in that respect.]



(Burns in sending this song to Johnson accompanied it by the following note:—

"Dear Mr. Publisher,

I hope against I return you will be able to tell from Mr. Clarke if these words will suit the tune. If they don't suit I must think on some other air, as I have a very strong private reason for wishing them in the 2d Volume. Don't forget to transcribe me the list of Antiquarian music. Farewell! R. Burns."

Burns's wish, it will be seen from the foregoing note by Mr. Douglas, was not gratified. The "strong private reason" it is not difficult to guess at. Burns wished to present the volume to Miss Chalmers, who seems to have been the goddess who at this time reigned in his heart.—J. H.)

THE YOUNG HIGHLAND ROVER.

Tune—"Morag."

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

LOUD blaw the frosty breezes,
  The snaws the mountains cover;
Like winter on me seizes,
  Since my young Highland rover,
  Far wanders nations over.
Where'er he go, where'er he stray,
  May Heaven be his warden;
Return him safe to fair Strathspey,
  And bonie Castle Gordon!*

The trees now naked groaning,
  Shall soon wi' leaves be *hinging*, hanging
The birdies *dowie* moaning; spiritless
  Shall a' be blythely singing,
  And every flower be springing;

*See note on verses on Castle Gordon. Strathspey is simply the Vale or "Strath" watered by the Spey. The well-known Scottish dance music takes its name from this Strath. Its more peculiar home, however, is in the higher (or Highland) part of the vale, where Gaelic is the native tongue and the bagpipe the native instrument.—J. H.

Sae I'll rejoice the lee-lang day,
When (by his mighty Warden)
My youth's return'd to fair Strathspey,
And bonie Castle Gordon.

[At page 118, *supra*, the reader has seen Burns's first effort to celebrate Castle Gordon in verses intended for the Gaelic air "Morag." Here he returns to the theme after becoming master of the tune, and throws a sprinkling of Scotch over the words to remove the objection the Duchess had to the former piece. This fits the beautiful air perfectly; but the poet lived to compose another song, "O wha is she that lo'es me," which better suits the sentiment of the music.

Who the "Young Highland Rover" of this song is, does not clearly appear. The mourner is in the character of a parent lamenting a son's absence while engaged in foreign warfare; but Stenhouse says that the allusion is to the misfortunes of the "Young Chevalier," who, before the disasters of Culloden, was warmly entertained at Castle Gordon.]

BIRTHDAY ODE FOR 31ST DECEMBER, 1787.

(BRIGHT'S GLENRIDDELL MSS., 1874.)

AFAR the illustrious Exile roams,*
Whom kingdoms on this day should hail;
An inmate in the casual shed,
On transient pity's bounty fed,
Haunted by busy memory's bitter tale!
Beasts of the forest having their savage homes,
But He, who should imperial purple wear,
Owns not the lap of earth where rests his royal head!

---

*Prince Charles Edward, called by his friends "The Young Chevalier," and, by his foes, "The Young Pretender," headed the rebellion of the Highlanders and others in the years 1745, 46, which was trodden out savagely at Culloden by the English army under the Duke of Cumberland. The Prince, after many hair-breadth escapes, finally got off greatly through the devotion, courage and address of Flora McDonald. He ultimately took up his abode at Rome, and died there precisely one month after the jubilee meeting for which the ode was written.—J. H.

His wretched refuge, dark despair,
While ravening wrongs and woes pursue,
And distant far the faithful few
Who would his sorrows share.

False flatterer, Hope, away!
Nor think to lure us as in days of yore:
We solemnize this sorrowing natal day,*
To prove our loyal truth—we can no more,
And owning Heaven's mysterious sway,
Submissive, low adore.
Ye honored, mighty Dead,
Who nobly perished in the glorious cause,
Your KING, your Country, and her laws,
From great DUNDEE, who smiling Victory led,
And fell a Martyr in her arms,
(What breast of northern ice but warms!)
To bold BALMERINO'S undying name,
Whose soul of fire, lighted at heaven's high flame,
Deserves the proudest wreath departed heroes claim:
Not unrevenged your fate shall lie,
It only lags, the fatal hour,
Your blood shall, with incessant cry,
Awake at last th' unsparing Power;
As from the cliff, with thundering course,
The snowy ruin smokes along
With doubling speed and gathering force,
Till deep it, crushing, whelms the cottage in the vale:
So Vengeance' arm, ensanguin'd, strong,
Shall with resistless might assail,
Usurping Brunswick's pride shall lay,
And STEWART'S wrongs and yours, with tenfold weight, repay.

---

*The Prince was born 31st December, 1720.

PERDITION, baleful child of night!
Rise and revenge the injured right
Of STEWART'S royal race:
Lead on the unmuzzled hounds of hell,
Till all the frighted echoes tell
The blood-notes of the chase!
Full on the quarry point their view,
Full on the base usurping crew,
The tools of faction, and the nation's curse!
Hark how the cry grows on the wind;
They leave the lagging gale behind,
Their savage fury, pityless, they pour;
With murdering eyes already they devour;
See Brunswick spent, a wretched prey,
His life one poor despairing day,
Where each avenging hour still ushers in a worse!
Such havock, howling all abroad,
Their utter ruin bring;
The base apostates to their GOD,
Or rebels to their KING.

[In the earlier part of December, Burns was preparing to go home to Ayrshire, and, while waiting for some settlement with his bookseller, Mr. Creech, had the misfortune to get himself severely lamed by a fall from a coach which a drunken driver had upset. This accident happened on Saturday the 8th of the month, and was the means of detaining him in Edinburgh till the 18th day of February following. It appears that a select club of Jacobites in and around the city were in the practice of celebrating the anniversary of Charles Edward Stewart's birthday, on the 31st of each December. Burns had been applied to by some of its members to favor the meeting with a birth-day Ode for the approaching festival, and, although he had no hope, perhaps no desire, to be present, he complied with the request. We may assume that the piece in the text was read or recited by some red-hot Jacobite of the period, and had the applause of a sympathetic audience. Currie thinks it might, "on a fair competition, where energy of feelings and expression were alone in question, have won the butt of Malmsey from the real poet-laureate of that day. He printed only the second of the three paragraphs of which the Ode is composed, breaking off at the word "Ven-

geance," in the fourth line from its close. He excused himself from printing the entire poem on the ground of its want of originality and interest. "A considerable part of it (he adds) is a kind of rant, for which indeed precedent may be cited in various other birth-day odes, but with which it is impossible to go along."] (Although Burns's Jacobitism was, as we have already said, more sentimental than substantial, undoubtedly this ode, coupled with his occasional satirical hits at the Hanoverian family, did him no good with the "powers that be," and largely, if not entirely, accounts for the fact that he never received the slightest recognition from any administration. His office, of exciseman, he owed to the Scottish Commissioners of Excise, and mainly to Mr. Graham of Fintry; yet even by some of them, we learn from his letter to Clarinda of January 27, 1788, he was "schooled" for his disloyal effusions.—J. H.)

ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT DUNDAS, ESQ. OF ARNISTON,

LATE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF SESSION.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

"I have two or three times in my life composed from the wish rather than from the impulse, but I never succeeded to any purpose. One of these times I shall ever remember with gnashing of teeth. 'Twas on the death of the late Lord President Dundas. My very worthy and respected friend, Mr. Alex. Wood, surgeon, urged me to pay a compliment in the way of my trade to his lordship's memory. Well, to work I went, and produced a copy of elegiac verses, some of them I own rather common-place, and others rather hide-bound, but on the whole, though they were far from being in my best manner, they were tolerable, and would, by some, have been thought very clever. I wrote a letter which, however, was in my very best manner, and enclosing my poem: Mr. Wood carried all together to Mr. Solicitor Dundas, that then was, and not finding him at home, left the parcel for him. His Solicitorship never took the smallest notice of the letter, the poem, or the poet. From that time, highly as I respect the talents of their family, I never see the name *Dundas* in the column of a newspaper, but my heart seems straitened for room in my bosom; and if I am obliged to read aloud

a paragraph relating to one of them, I feel my forehead flush, and my nether lip quiver."—*Letter to Alex. Cunningham*, 11*th March*, 1791.

LONE on the bleaky hills the straying flocks
Shun the fierce storms among the sheltering rocks;
Down from the rivulets, red with dashing rains,
The gathering floods burst o'er the distant plains;
Beneath the blast the leafless forests groan;
The hollow caves return a hollow moan.

Ye hills, ye plains, ye forests, and ye caves,
Ye howling winds, and wintry swelling waves!
Unheard, unseen, by human ear or eye,
Sad to your sympathetic glooms I fly;
Where, to the whistling blast and water's roar,
Pale Scotia's recent wound I may deplore.

O heavy loss, thy country ill could bear!
A loss these evil days can ne'er repair!
Justice, the high vicegerent of her God,
Her doubtful balance eyed, and sway'd her rod:
Hearing the tidings of the fatal blow,
She sank, abandon'd to the wildest woe.

Wrongs, injuries, from many a darksome den,
Now, gay in hope, explore the paths of men:
See from his cavern grim Oppression rise,
And throw on Poverty his cruel eyes;
Keen on the helpless victim see him fly,
And stifle, dark, the feebly-bursting cry:

Mark Ruffian Violence, distained with crimes,
Rousing elate in these degenerate times,
View unsuspecting Innocence a prey,
As guileful Fraud points out the erring way:

While subtile Litigation's pliant tongue
The life-blood equal sucks of Right and Wrong:
Hark, injur'd Want recounts th' unlisten'd tale,
And much-wrong'd Mis'ry pours th' unpitied wail!

Ye dark, waste hills, ye brown unsightly plains,
Congenial scenes, ye soothe my mournful strains:
Ye tempests, rage! ye turbid torrents, roll!
Ye suit the joyless tenor of my soul.
Life's social haunts and pleasures I resign;
Be nameless wilds and lonely wanderings mine,
To mourn the woes my country must endure-
That wound degenerate ages cannot cure.

[In the "Clarinda" correspondence we find that "Sylvander" sent her a copy of this poem before the close of December 1787, and he cautions her against giving away copies to others. Her criticism is—"The lines are very pretty. I like the idea of personifying the Vices rising in the absence of Justice."

The bard copied this, along with several other unpublished pieces, into an interleaved copy of his poems possessed by Bishop John Geddes of Edinburgh, and the following note is subjoined to the Elegy:—"The foregoing poem has some tolerable lines in it, but the incurable wound of my pride will not suffer me to correct or even peruse it. I sent a copy of it, with my best prose letter, to the son of the great man, the theme of the piece, by the hand, too, of one of the noblest men in God's world, Alexander Wood, surgeon, when behold, his Solicitorship took no more notice of my poem, or me, than I had been a strolling fiddler, who had made free with his lady's name over the head of a silly new reel! Did the gentleman think I looked for any dirty gratuity?" Burns seems to have remembered this matter when, in January, 1796, a Tory majority ousted the Hon. Harry Erskine, and elected Dundas to be Dean of Faculty. See the poem, "Dire was the hate at old Harlaw."

This Elegy was first printed in the Edinburgh Magazine for June 1818. We take our text from the poet's holograph in the British Museum.]

(Had Burns been more familiar with grief for the loss of dear ones, and better acquainted with its rights, he would not have obtruded his sympathy on a sorrowing family, almost at the moment of its bereavement. The best apology for him is that he was

urged to write it by friends in whom he had confidence—especially by Dr. Wood and Mr. Charles Hay, Advocate, afterwards Lord Newton. The Dundas family were, at this time, the most powerful family, politically, in Scotland, and there can be little doubt that his generous friends hoped that the tribute to one so closely allied with the Court and Administration would tend to expiate his many political escapades.—J. H.)

SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

EXTEMPORE REPLY TO VERSES ADDRESSED TO THE AUTHOR BY A LADY, UNDER THE SIGNATURE OF "CLARINDA."

(BRIGHT'S GLENRIDDELL MSS, 1874.)

"Almighty love still reigns and revels in my bosom, and I am at this moment ready to hang myself for a young Edinburgh widow, who has wit and wisdom more murderously fatal than the assassinating stiletto of the Sicilian bandit, or the poisoned arrow of the African savage. You may guess of her wit by the following verses which she sent me the other day."—*Letter to Richard Brown, Dec. 30th*, 1787.

ON BURNS'S SAYING HE 'HAD NOTHING ELSE TO DO.'

When first you saw Clarinda's charms,
What rapture in your bosom grew!
Her heart was shut to Love's alarms,
But then—you'd nothing else to do.

Apollo oft had lent his harp,
But now 'twas strung from Cupid's bow;
You sung—it reached Clarinda's heart—
She wished you'd nothing else to do.

Fair Venus smil'd, Minerva frown'd,
Cupid observed, the arrow flew:
Indifference (ere a week went round)
Show'd you had nothing else to do.

* * * * * * * * * *

CHRISTMAS EVE. (Signed) CLARINDA.

WHEN dear Clarinda, matchless fair,
First struck Sylvander's raptur'd view,
He gaz'd, he listened to despair,
Alas! 'twas all he dared to do.

Love, from Clarinda's heavenly eyes,
  Transfixed his bosom thro' and thro';
But still in Friendship's guarded guise,
  For more the demon fear'd to do.

That heart, already more than lost,
  The imp beleaguer'd all *perdue;*
For frowning Honor kept his post—
  To meet that frown he shrunk to do.

His pangs the Bard refused to own,
  Tho' half he wish'd Clarinda knew;
But Anguish wrung the unweeting groan—
  Who blames what frantic pain must do?

That heart, where motley follies blend,
  Was sternly still to Honor true:
To prove Clarinda's fondest friend,
  Was what a lover sure might do.

The Muse his ready quill employed,
  No nearer bliss he could pursue;
That bliss Clarinda cold deny'd—
  "Send word by Charles how you do!"

The chill behest disarm'd his muse,
  Till passion all impatient grew:
He wrote, and hinted for excuse,
  'Twas, 'cause "he'd nothing else to do."

But by those hopes I have above!
  And by those faults I dearly rue!
The deed, the boldest mark of love,
  For thee, that deed I dare to do!

O could the Fates but name the price
  Would bless me with your charms and you!
With frantic joy I'd pay it thrice,
  If human art and power could do!

Then take, Clarinda, friendship's hand,
  (Friendship, at least, I may avow;)
And lay no more your chill command,—
  I'll write, whatever I've to do.

SYLVANDER.

[The lady who corresponded for some time with Burns under the Arcadian name of "Clarinda" was Mrs. Agnes Craig or M'Lehose, wife of Mr. James M'Lehose, a writer in Glasgow, who forsook her after three years' cohabitation, and went to reside in the West Indies. In 1782 she took up her abode in Edinburgh, and in the beginning of December, 1787, Burns and she met at the house of Miss Nimmo, an elderly lady and an intimate friend of Peggy Chalmers. They were mutually attracted and a correspondence sprang up, which will be found at the opening of our fifth volume. To our "Introductory Note" to that correspondence we refer the reader for fuller details regarding Clarinda, and her relation to the poet, or Sylvander.

The letter sent to her by the poet immediately before Christmas Eve, contains the expression—"I have written you this scrawl because I have nothing else to do." Clarinda's letter of 28th December, closes with these words:—"Good night; for Clarinda's 'heavenly eyes' need the earthly aid of sleep."* In reply, she sent him a poem of six stanzas, only three of which—those, namely, quoted above—Burns seems to have thought worth preserving. The poem above is Burns's answer to hers. The words "heavenly eyes" put by her in inverted commas are in humorous reference to the same expression in the second stanza of the poem which forms our text.—J. H.]

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*Of this letter, now in possession of Mr. Robert Clarke, Cincinnati, we give a fac-simile at its proper place in the Correspondence.—J. H.

LOVE IN THE GUISE OF FRIENDSHIP.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

YOUR friendship much can make me blest,
O why that bliss destroy!
Why urge the only, one request
You know I will deny!

Your thought, if Love must harbor there,
Conceal it in that thought;
Nor cause me from my bosom tear
The very friend I sought.

[These two stanzas were written by Burns to supplement or complete a pretty canzonette composed and sent to him by Clarinda on 3d January, 1788. She thus wrote to him:—"You have put me in a rhyming humor. The moment I read yours I wrote the following lines:—

Talk not of Love! it gives me pain,
For Love has been my foe:
He bound me in an iron chain,
And plung'd me deep in woe.

But Friendship's pure and lasting joys,
My heart was form'd to prove;
The worthy object be of those,
But never talk of Love.

The hand of Friendship I accept,
May Honor be our guard,
Virtue our intercourse direct,
Her smiles our dear reward."

The poet replied on the following day, saying:—Your last verses have so delighted me that I have got an excellent old Scots air that suits the measure, and you shall see them in print in the 'Scots Musical Museum.' I want four stanzas; you gave me three, and one of them alluded to an expression in my former letter; so I have taken your first two verses, with a slight alteration in the second, and have added a third. The change in the (third line of the) second stanza,

There, welcome, win and wear the prize,

is no improvement; but there was a slight inaccuracy in your rhyme.

The latter half of your first stanza would have been worthy of Sappho. I am in raptures with it. . . . . What would you think of this for a fourth stanza?

Your thought, if Love must harbor there," &c.

GO ON, SWEET BIRD, AND SOOTHE MY CARE.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

FOR thee is laughing Nature gay,
For thee she pours the vernal day;
For me in vain is Nature drest,
While Joy's a stranger to my breast.

[These lines were written by Burns about the end of January 1788, to supplement a little song by Clarinda, which he sent to Johnson to fit an old melody called "The Banks of Spey." Clarinda in forwarding it to Burns, calls it "the first fruits" of her muse, and says, "It was written to soothe an aching heart. I then labored under a cruel anguish of soul, which I cannot now tell you of." Her pretty composition is as follows:

"ON HEARING A BLACKBIRD SING AT HEAD OF BRUNTSFIELD LINKS, EDINBURGH."

"Go on, sweet bird, and soothe my care,
Thy cheerful notes will hush despair;
Thy tuneful warblings, void of art,
Thrill sweetly through my aching heart.

Now choose thy mate, and fondly love,
And all the charming transport prove;
Whilst I, a love-lorn exile, live,
And rapture nor receive, nor give.

Those sweet emotions all enjoy,
Let Love and Song thy hours employ:
Go on, sweet bird, and soothe my care,
Thy cheerful notes will hush despair."]

CLARINDA, MISTRESS OF MY SOUL.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

CLARINDA, mistress of my soul,
  The measur'd time is run!
The wretch beneath the dreary pole
  So marks his latest sun.

To what dark cave of frozen night
  Shall poor Sylvander hie;
Depriv'd of thee, his life and light,
  The sun of all his joy.

We part—but by these precious drops,
  That fill thy lovely eyes,
No other light shall guide my steps,
  Till thy bright beams arise!

She, the fair sun of all her sex,
  Has blest my glorious day;
And shall a glimmering planet fix
  My worship to its ray?

[These elegant stanzas were composed before the end of January 1788, in anticipation of the author's approaching departure from Edinburgh. His injured limb was sufficiently restored to admit of his visiting Clarinda in a chair, or coach, during the first week of that month; but the parting visit was deferred till past the middle of February. He had formed some intimacy with Mr. J. G. C. Schetky, a distinguished violoncellist from Germany, and the above verses were sent to him to be set to music, which appeared along with the words in Johnson's second volume. The melody, however, never became popular, and Mr. Stephen Clarke afterwards composed an air for the same song, which was equally unsuccessful. The latter appeared in George Thompson's collection, with the opening words altered to "Farewell, dear mistress of my heart." The second line of the succeeding stanza was also sub-

jected to a similar alteration, thus :—"Shall your poor wand'rer hie." Of course, these changes had not been sanctioned by Burns, after whose death the new version appeared.]

I'M O'ER YOUNG TO MARRY YET.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

Chorus.—I'm o'er young, I'm o'er young,
I'm o'er young to marry yet;
I'm o'er young, 'twad be a sin
To tak me frae my mammy yet.

I AM my mammy's *ae* bairn, — only
Wi' *unco* folk I weary, sir; — strange
And lying in a strange bed,
I'm *fley'd* it mak me *eerie*, sir, — afraid — dismal
I'm o'er young, &c.

Hallowmass * is come and gane,
The nights are lang in winter, sir,
And you an' I in *ae* bed, — one
In trowth, I dare na venture, sir.
I'm o'er young, &c.

Fu' loud an' *shill* the frosty wind — shrill
Blaws thro' the leafless *timmer*, sir; — trees
But if ye come this *gate* again, — way
I'll aulder be *gin simmer*, sir. — by summer
I'm o'er young, &c.

[The reader will understand that Johnson's second volume was fast progressing towards publication, while the poet was laid up with his bruised limb in Mr. Cruikshank's house. The Clarinda correspondence, voluminous as it is, formed but one item of his daily occupation. He had collected during his northern tour

* 31st October.

several Highland airs which he desired to clothe with suitable words, and these he wished to include in that volume.

The above song, of course, required no effort on Burns's part. In this instance, as in several others, he merely rattled off a few stanzas to serve as a vehicle for presenting the tune in his friend's publication. The melody as popularised within the past half-century is a current favorite, whether used as a reel or a song, and is a manifest improvement on the set printed in the Museum from R. Bremner's collection (*circa* 1758). We can imagine Burns listening to the effect of his song, as performed by his little "Rosebud," seated by his side at the harpsichord.]

TO THE WEAVER'S *GIN* YE GO. if

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

My heart was ance as blythe and free
As simmer days were lang;
But a bonie, *westlin* weaver lad west-country
Has *gart* me change my sang. made

Chorus.—To the weaver's gin ye go, fair maids,
To the weaver's gin ye go;
I *rede* you right, *gang* ne'er at night, counsel / go
To the weaver's gin ye go.

My mither sent me to the town,
To warp a plaiden *wab;* web
But the weary, weary warpin o't
Has gart me sigh and sab.
To the weaver's, &c.

A bonie, westlin weaver lad
Sat working at his loom;
He took my heart as wi a net,
In every knot and thrum.
To the weaver's, &c.

I sat beside my warpin-wheel,
And ay I *ca'd* it roun' ; turned
But every shot and every knock,
My heart it *gae* a *stoun.* gave stound
To the weaver's, &c.

The moon was sinking in the west,
Wi' visage pale and wan,
As my bonie, westlin weaver lad
Convoy'd me thro' the glen.
To the weaver's, &c.

But what was said, or what was done,
Shame fa' me gin I tell ; *
But Oh ! I fear the *kintra* soon country
Will ken as weel's mysel !
To the weaver's, &c.

[The poet admits the authorship of this song, with the exception of the old chorus. Perhaps he has here a sly allusion to certain reports that reached him in the early summer of 1786 concerning his Jean. She had been sent off to Paisley to keep her out of the poet's road, and he was occasionally fed with rumors that she had been dancing at balls with a certain Robie Wilson, a weaver in that town.]

M'PHERSON'S FAREWELL.

Tune—"M'Pherson's Rant."

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

FAREWELL, ye dungeons dark and strong,
The wretch's destinie !
M'Pherson's time will not be long
On yonder gallows-tree.

* "Shame befall me if I tell !" A strong form of adjuration.—J. H.

Chorus.—Sae *rantingly*, sae wantonly, frolicsomely
Sae *dauntingly gaed* he; defiantly went
He play'd a *spring*, and danc'd it round, dance-tune
Below the gallows-tree.

O what is death but parting breath?
On many a bloody plain
I've dared his face, and in this place
I scorn him yet again!
Sae rantingly, &c.

Untie these bands from off my hands,
And bring to me my sword;
And there's no a man in all Scotland,
But I'll brave him at a word.
Sae rantingly, &c.

I've liv'd a life of sturt and strife;
I die by treacherie:
It burns my heart I must depart,
And not avengéd be.
Sae rantingly, &c.

Now farewell light, thou sunshine bright,
And all beneath the sky!
May coward shame distain his name,
The wretch that dare not die!
Sae rantingly, &c.

[The above "grand lyric," as Lockhart has termed it, was one of the fruits of the poet's Highland Tour. That biographer says, "It is from this time that we must date Burns's ambition to transmit his own poetry to posterity, in eternal association with those exquisite airs which had hitherto, in far too many instances, been married to verses that did not deserve to be immortal."]

(The following is the song on whose basis Burns composed his "Farewell." Buchan says of it, "The copy I shall now give as illustrative of Burns's song, is from the recitation of a very old person, and said to be the real composition of the unfortunate Macpherson himself when in jail, waiting the severe sentence of the law, and owes its preservation to the following cause. A young woman of respectable parents, with whom he had lived during his unsettled life, had formed for him an inseparable attachment, so that in his dungeon she was known to love him. She learned her lover's "Farewell," which she called "the remains of her Jamie," while in prison, and after having witnessed his final exit on an inglorious gallows, she returned to her wandering life, which she led ever after, and sung, wherever she went, the following song, as composed by Macpherson:—

"I've spent my time in rioting,
Debauch'd my health and strength,
I squander'd fast as pillage came,
And fell to shame at length.
But dantonly and wantonly,
And rantonly I'll gae,
I'll play a tune and dance it roun',
Below the gallows-tree.

"To hang upon the gallows-tree,
Accurs'd disgraceful death!
Like a vile dog hung up to be,
And stifled in my breath.
But dantonly, &c.

"My father was a gentleman
Of fame and lineage high;
Oh! mother, would you ne'er had born
A wretch so doom'd to die.
But dantonly, &c.

"The laird o' Grant,* with power aboon
The royal majesty,
He pled fu' well for Peter Brown,
But let Macpherson die.
But dantonly, &c.

"But Braco Duff,† in rage enough,
He first laid hands on me;
If death did not arrest my course,
Avenged I should be.
But dantonly, &c.

---

*Now represented by the Earl of Seafield, who is head of the clan Grant. —J. H.

†Now represented by the Earl of Fife, the head of the Duffs. The earliest possession of the family was the estate of Braco, in Banffshire.—J. H.

"But vengeance I did never wreak
When power was in my hand,
And you my friends no vengeance seek,
Obey my last command.
But dantonly, &c.

"Forgive the man whose rage could seek
Macpherson's worthless life,
When I am gone, be it ne'er said
My legacy was strife.
Yet dantonly, &c.

"And ye that blame with cruel scorn
The wand'ring gipsy's ways;
Oh! think if homeless, houseless born,
Ye could spend better days.
But dantonly, &c.

"If all the wealth on land and sea
Within my power was laid,
I'd give it all this hour to be
On the soldier's dying bed.
Yet dantonly, &c.

"I've led a life o' meikle strife,
Sweet peace ne'er smiled on me;
It grieves me sair that I maun gae
An' nae avenged be.
But dantonly and wantonly,
And rantonly I'll gae,
I'll play a tune, and dance it roun',
Below the gallows-tree."

M'Pherson was hanged on the Gallow-hill of Banff, on the 16th Nov., 1700. He was an excellent performer on the violin, and after playing the "Spring," as stated in the verses, he offered the instrument which had been his solace in many a gloomy hour, to several of the by-standers, but none having courage to accept of the proffered boon, he dashed it to pieces, that it might perish with himself, and so went singing into eternity. His body afterwards found a resting-place beneath the gallows-tree, on which he paid the forfeit of his life.

It is a tradition in Banff that a pardon for M'Pherson was on its way to the burgh in time to arrive before noon—the hour fixed for his execution—but that the authorities, anxious to ensure the cateran's death, caused the town-clock to be advanced an hour, so that he was hanged at 11 A.M. instead of 12 noon. Superstitious people are still to be met with who tell you that Banff clock continues to this day to strike 12 at 11 A.M.—J. H.)

STAY MY CHARMER.

Gaelic Air—"The Black-haired Lad."

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

STAY my charmer, can you leave me!
Cruel, cruel to deceive me;
Well you know how much you grieve me;
Cruel charmer, can you go!
Cruel charmer, can you go!

By my love so ill-requited,
By the faith you fondly plighted,
By the pangs of lovers slighted,
Do not, do not leave me so!
Do not, do not leave me so!

[These lines were composed to suit a celebrated Gaelic melody with which the poet was smitten on hearing it sung in the course of his Highland excursion.]

SONG—MY *HOGGIE*. one-year-old sheep

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

WHAT will I do *gin* my Hoggie die? if
My joy, my pride, my Hoggie!
My only beast, I had *nae mae*, no more
And vow but I was *vogie!* vain
The *lee-lang* night we watch'd the *fauld*, live-long fold
Me and my faithfu' doggie;
We heard *nocht* but the roaring *linn*, nothing cascade
Amang the *braes* sae *scroggie*. heights brushy

But the *houlet* cry'd frae the castle wa', owl
The *blitter* frae the boggie; mire-snipe
The *tod* reply'd upon the hill, fox
I trembled for my Hoggie.

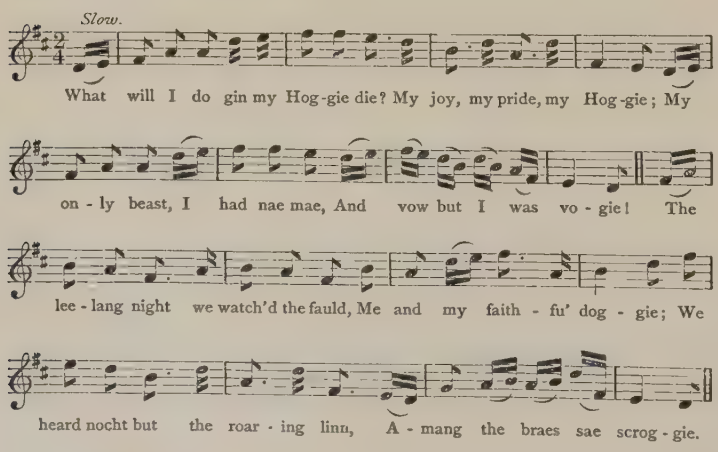
When day did *daw*, and cocks did craw, dawn
The morning it was foggie;
An *unco tyke*, *lap* o'er the *dyke* strange dog leapt / fence
And *maist* has kill'd my Hoggie! almost

(This production, quaint alike in its versification and humor, is obviously enough, an old song improved. It is almost unnecessary to add that it is purely allegorical. Cromek, not seeing, probably, its full meaning, says:—"It is a silly subject treated sublimely; it has much of the fervor of *The Vision*."—J. H.)

[The poet's own note on this song in the Glenriddell MSS. refers entirely to the tune. It is as follows:—"Dr. Walker, who was minister of Moffat in 1772, and is now (1791) Professor of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh, told Mr. Riddell the following anecdote concerning this air. He said that some gentlemen, riding a few years ago through Liddisdale, stopped at a hamlet consisting of a few houses, called Mosspaul; when they were struck with this tune, which an old woman, spinning on a rock at her door, was singing. All she could tell concerning it was that she was taught it when a child, and it was called 'What will I do gin my Hoggie die?' No person, except a few females at Mosspaul, knew this fine old tune, which in all probability would have been lost, had not one of the gentlemen, who happened to have a flute with him, taken it down."

Stenhouse tells us that the gentleman who took down the tune was the late Stephen Clarke; but he had no occasion for a flute to assist him as stated by Dr. Walker.]

Mr. Douglass gives the following set in his edition of Burns:—



RAVING WINDS AROUND HER BLOWING.

Tune—"M'Grigor of Roro's Lament."

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

I composed these verses on Miss Isabella M'Leod of Raasay, alluding to her feelings on the death of her sister, and the still more melancholy death of her sister's husband, the late Earl of Loudon, who shot himself out of sheer heart-break at some mortifications he suffered, owing to the deranged state of his finances.—*R. B.*, 1791.*

RAVING winds around her blowing,
Yellow leaves the woodland strewing,
By a river hoarsely roaring,
Isabella stray'd deploring—

"Farewell, hours that late did measure
Sunshine days of joy and pleasure;
Hail, thou gloomy night of sorrow,
Cheerless night that knows no morrow!

"O'er the past too fondly wandering,
On the hopeless future pondering;
Chilly grief my life-blood freezes,
Fell despair my fancy seizes.

"Life, thou soul of every blessing,
Load to misery most distressing,
Gladly how would I resign thee,
And to dark oblivion join thee!"

---

* The poet might have also referred to her father's recent death: "Dec. 16, 1786.—At Raasay, John M'Leod, Esq. of Raasay, aged 69;" and her brother's death: "July 20, 1787.—At Edinburgh, John M'Leod, Esq., youngest son of the late John M'Leod, of Raasay, Esq."—*Scots Mag.*

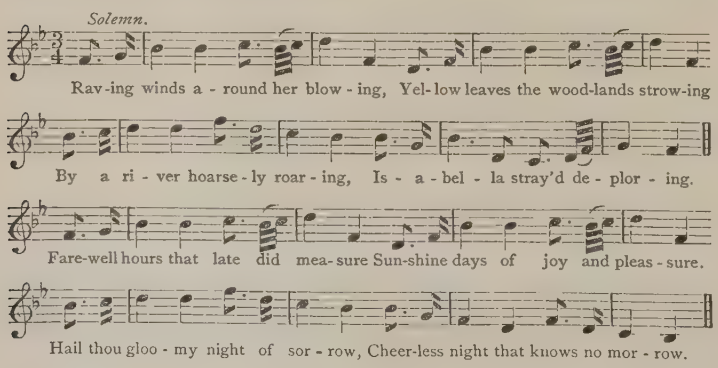
[The reader is referred to p. 100 *supra*, for some account of the family of M'Leod of Raasay. This composition appears to have been suggested by a well-known song of Gay's beginning—

> "'Twas when the seas were roaring with hollow blasts of wind,
> A damsel lay deploring, all on a rock reclined."

The Gaelic air, "M'Grigor a Ruora," seems to have been a great favorite about the time Burns visited the North. Some rather elegant English verses appeared about the close of last century, professing to be a translation of the words that originally belonged to the melody. The opening stanza will shew that Burns's words are in a somewhat different measure; hence there must exist various sets of the music.

> "From the chace on the mountain
> As I was returning,
> By the side of a fountain
> Malvina sat mourning;
> To the winds that loud whistled
> She told her sad story,
> And the vallies re-echoed, 'M'Grigor a Ruora.'"

Burns's opinion of the verses which form the text may be gathered from the following passage in one of his letters to Mrs. Dunlop, shortly after he commenced farming at Ellisland:—"I was yesterday at Mr. Miller's house to dinner for the first time. My reception was quite to my mind; from the lady of the house quite flattering. . . . In the course of conversation, 'Johnson's Musical Museum' was talked of. We got a song on the harpsichord beginning 'Raving winds around her blowing.' The air was much admired: the lady of the house asked me whose were the words. —'Mine, Madam—they are indeed my very best verses.' She took not the smallest notice of them! . . . I was going to make a New Testament quotation about 'casting pearls,' but that would be too virulent, for the lady is actually a woman of sense and taste."]



UP IN THE MORNING EARLY.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

CAULD blaws the wind frae east to west,
The drift is driving *sairly;* sorely
Sae loud and *shill* 's I hear the blast— shrill
I'm sure it's winter fairly.

Chorus.—Up in the morning's no for me,
Up in the morning early;
When a' the hills are cover'd wi' snaw,
I'm sure it's winter fairly.

The birds sit chittering in the thorn,
A' day they fare but sparely;
And lang's the night frae e'en to morn—
I'm sure it's winter fairly.
Up in the morning's, &c.

[The beautiful air which belongs to this song is sufficient to recommend very indifferent words; and yet these lines by Burns are in his best manner. The only thing to regret is that he did not extend it somewhat, for it is too short to satisfy the ear. Although the tune is truly Scotch, it has been popular in England for more than two hundred years. In 1652, John Hilton published what he called a "Northern Catch" for three voices, and this very tune is there adapted for the third voice. Some forty years thereafter, Henry Purcell borrowed the same idea by composing a Birthday song for Queen Mary (consort of William of Orange), in which this tune was made to serve for the bass part. It appears that the Queen had, in Purcell's hearing, when she grew tired of listening to some of his compositions, yawned and asked Mrs. Arabella Hunt to cheer her with a Scotch song, and accordingly she sung "Cauld and raw the wind doth blaw" to this melody.]

(This fine piece is written on the basis of an old song of which the chorus only is retained by Burns, the two stanzas being entirely his. It is interesting to observe that the poet, in his complaint of winter, cannot forget the birds.—J. H.)

HOW LONG AND DREARY IS THE NIGHT.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

How long and dreary is the night,
  When I am frae my dearie!
I sleepless lye frae *e'en* to morn, evening
  Tho' I were ne'er so weary:
I sleepless lye frae e'en to morn,
  Tho' I were ne'er so weary!

When I think on the happy days
  I spent wi' you my dearie:
And now what lands between us lie,
  How can I be but *eerie!* dismal
And now what lands between us lye,
  How can I be but eerie!

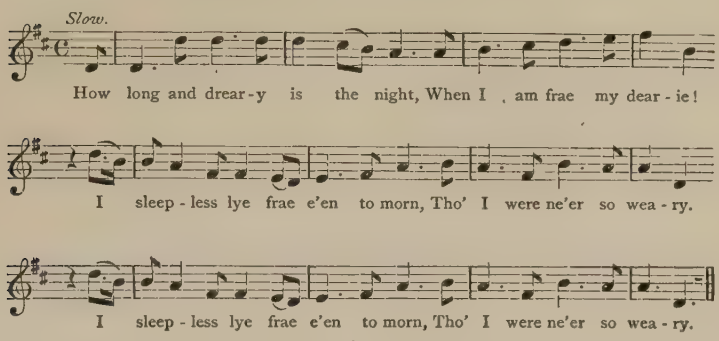
How slow ye move, ye heavy hours,
  As ye were *wae* and weary! woeful
It was na sae ye glinted by,
  When I was wi' my dearie!
It was na sae ye glinted by,
  When I was wi' my dearie!

(In October 1794, to gratify a *penchant* which George Thomson had for the air "Cauld Kail in Aberdeen," the poet altered the structure of the above exquisite song, and added a chorus as follows:—

"For oh, her lanely nights are lang!
And oh, her dreams are eerie!
And oh, her widowed heart is sair
That's absent frae her dearie."

Of the song Burns says to Thomson:—"I met with some such words in a collection of songs somewhere, which I altered and enlarged." We give the later form of the song under the year 1794, when it was sent to Thomson.—J. H.)

[In the *Museum*, this song is set to an extremely sweet and simple melody, styled "A Gaelick Air." If it be so, it is a very happy imitation of the Lowland style.]



HEY, THE DUSTY MILLER.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

HEY, the dusty Miller,
And his dusty coat,
He will win a shilling,
Or he spend a *groat:* before fourpence
Dusty was the coat,
Dusty was the color,
Dusty was the kiss
That I gat frae the Miller.

Hey, the dusty Miller,
And his dusty sack;
Leeze me on the calling Commend me to
Fills the dusty peck:
Fills the dusty peck,
Brings the dusty *siller;* silver (*money*)
I wad gie my coatie
For the dusty Miller.

[It is impossible to say what portions of this song may belong to an older version of the same subject, as the ancient one seems not to exist entire in print. The poet's manuscript supplied to Johnson is still preserved, and corresponds exactly with the copy given in the *Museum*.] (Allan Cunningham says:—"The present strain was modified for the Museum by Burns, and is a very happy specimen of his skill and taste in emendation. Other verses may be found in our collections:—

> Hey the merry miller!
> As the wheel runs roun',
> An the clapper claps
> My heart gies a stoun;
> Water grinds the corn,
> Water wins the siller,
> When the dam is dry
> I daute wi' the miller.'"

Millers were favorites with the early rustic muse of Scotland. King James introduces a Miller in his poem of "Christ's Kirk on the Green." Ramsay depicts a kind, free-handed Miller in his "Monk and the Miller's Wife," and the Miller of Dee is a well-known personage. A favorite old song begins:—

> "O, merry may the maid be
> That marries the miller,
> For fair day and foul day
> He's aye bringing till her."—J. H.)

DUNCAN DAVISON.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

THERE was a lass, they ca'd her Meg,
And she held o'er the moors to spin;
There was a lad that follow'd her,
They ca'd him Duncan Davison.
The moor was *driegh*, and Meg was *skeigh*, tedious / saucy
Her favor Duncan could na win;
For wi' the *rock* she wad him knock, distaff
And ay she shook the temper-pin.

As o'er the moor they lightly *foor*, fared (*went*)
  A burn was clear, a glen was green,
Upon the banks they eas'd their *shanks*, legs
  And ay she set the wheel between :
But Duncan swoor a *haly aith*, holy oath
  That Meg should be a bride *the morn;* to-morrow
Then Meg took up her *spinnin-graith*, spinning implements
  And flang them a' out o'er the burn.

We will *big* a wee, wee house, build
  And we will live like king and queen ;
Sae blythe and merry 's we will be,
  When ye set by the wheel at e'en.
A man may drink, and no be drunk ;
  A man may fight, and no be slain ;
And man may kiss a bonie lass,
  And ay be welcome back again !

[These words to a favorite old dancing-tune called by the name of the hero of the song, were written by Burns, although his name is not attached to them in the *Museum*. That the poet was familiar with the tune of Duncan Davison in his early years appears from the fact that his beautiful song "Mary Morison" was composed to it.]

THE LAD THEY CA' JUMPIN JOHN.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

HER daddie forbad, her *minnie* forbad, mother
  Forbidden she *wadna be:* would not
She wadna *trow't*, the *browst** she brew'd, believe it ale
  Wad taste sae bitterlie.

* A browst is as much malt liquor as is brewed at once.—J. H.

Chorus.—The lang lad they ca' Jumpin John
Beguil'd the bonie lassie,
The lang lad they ca' Jumpin John
Beguil'd the bonie lassie.

A cow and a *cauf*, a *yowe* and a half,* calf ewe
And *thretty* gude shillins and three; thirty
A vera gude *tocher*, a cotter-man's *dochter*, dowry / daughter
The lass wi' the bonie black e'e.
The lang lad, &c.

[The above lines belong to the class of which Burns thus observed:—"Here let me once for all apologize for many silly compositions of mine in this work. Many of the beautiful airs wanted words. In the hurry of other avocations, if I could string a parcel of rhymes together anything near tolerable, I was fain to let them pass. He must be an excellent poet whose every performance is excellent."] (No one acquainted with Burns, will for a moment judge him to have been the original author of this song. The first two lines and the chorus are certainly old. It is one of his adaptations for the sake of the music.—J. H.)

TALK OF HIM THAT'S FAR AWA'.

(Johnson's Museum, 1788.)

Musing on the roaring ocean,
Which divides my love and me;
Wearying heav'n in warm devotion,
For his weal where'er he be.

Hope and Fear's alternate billow
Yielding late to Nature's law,
Whispering spirits round my pillow,
Talk of him that's far awa.

* A ewe and its lamb. Half is here introduced for the sake of the rhyme. —J. H.

Ye whom sorrow never wounded,
  Ye who never shed a tear,
Care-untroubled, joy-surrounded,
  Gaudy day to you is dear.

Gentle night, do thou befriend me,
  Downy sleep, the curtain draw;
Spirits kind, again attend me,
  Talk of him that's far awa!

[These pathetic stanzas, the poet informs us, were composed "out of compliment to a Mrs. M'Lauchlan, whose husband is an officer in the East Indies."]

TO DAWT ON* ME.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

THE blude-red rose at Yule may *blaw*, blow
The simmer lilies bloom in snaw,
The frost may freeze the deepest sea;
But an auld man shall never dawt on me.

Refrain.—To dawt on me, to dawt on me,
  An auld man shall never dawt on me.

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*Hitherto the title of this song in every edition of Burns appears as *To Daunton Me.* Every Scotchman knows that the word *Daunton*, which simply means to daunt or frighten, conveys an entirely false meaning here. The girl obviously means that no old man shall pet or fondle her, or, as it is expressed in Scotch, *dawt on* her. That this was the expression Burns meant to use we confidently believe (*daunton* being either a miswrite or a misprint), so we have changed the Title of the song accordingly. In writing the pithy lyric Burns had the refrain of an old Jacobite song ringing in his ears:—

"To daunton me, to daunton me,
D'ye ken the things wad daunton me?
Eighty-eight and eighty-nine
And a' the dreary years sin syne
With cess and press and Presbytry
Gude faith, these were like to have dauntoned me.

But to wanton me, but to wanton me,
D'ye ken the things that wad wanton me," &c.—J. H.

To dawt on me, and me sae young,
Wi' his *fause* heart and flatt'ring tongue, false
That is the thing you shall never see,
For an auld man shall never dawt on me.
To dawt on me, &c.

For a' his meal and a' his *maut*,* malt
For a' his fresh beef and his *saut*, salt
For a' his gold and white monie,
An auld man shall never dawt on me.
To dawt on me, &c.

His *gear* may buy him *kye* and *yowes*, money cows ewes
His gear may buy him *glens* and *knowes*; valleys knolls
But me he shall not buy nor fee,
For an auld man shall never dawt on me.
To dawt on me, &c.

He *hirples twa-fauld* as he *dow*, limps two-fold can
Wi' his teethless *gab* and his auld *beld pow*, mouth bald head
And the rain rains down frae his red *blear'd* e'e; dim
That auld man shall never dawt on me.
To dawt on me, &c.

THE WINTER IT IS PAST.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

THE winter it is past, and the summer comes at last,
And the small birds, they sing on ev'ry tree;
Now ev'ry thing is glad, while I am very sad,
Since my true love is parted from me.

* In early times home-brewed ale was the national Scottish beverage, as oat-meal was the "staff of life." "Rowth o' meal and maut" is an old phrase, still used, to express abundance to eat and drink.—J. H.

The rose upon the *breer*, by the waters running clear, — briar
May have charms for the linnet or the bee;
Their little loves are blest, and their little hearts at rest,
But my true love is parted from me.

[The foregoing two verses, having been found in the poet's manuscript, were published by Cromek in 1808, as a "Relique of Burns:" but, in truth, only the second stanza was composed by him. With a desire to preserve its beautiful air, our author had culled three verses from a stall-ballad, known under the title of "The Curragh of Kildare," and, by interpolating a stanza of his own, and smoothing the others a little, he produced the pretty song in four verses, given at the close of Johnson's second volume. The two concluding stanzas are these:—

My love, like yonder sun, in the firmament doth run,
Ever bright, ever constant and true;
But his is like the moon that wanders up and down,
And every month it is new.

Ye maidens cross'd in love—and the cross will not remove—
How I pity the pains you endure!
For experience makes me know that your hearts are full of woe,
A woe that no mortal can cure.]

THE BONIE LAD THAT'S FAR AWA.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1792.)

O HOW can I be blythe and glad,
Or how can I gang brisk and *braw*, — fine
When the bonie lad that I lo'e best
Is o'er the hills and far awa!

It's no the frosty winter wind,
It's no the driving drift and snaw;
But ay the tear comes in my e'e,
To think on him that's far awa.*

* This verse is not in Johnson's copy. It first appeared in Cromek's Reliques, 1808.

My father *pat* me frae his door, put
My friends they hae disown'd me a' ;
But I hae ane will tak my part,
The bonie lad that's far awa.

A pair o' glooves he bought to me,
And silken *snoods* he *gae* me twa ; ribands for the hair } gave }
And I will wear them for his sake,
The bonie lad that's far awa.

O weary Winter soon will pass,
And Spring will *cleed* the *birken shaw* ; clothe } birch wood }
And my young babie will be born,
And he'll be hame that's far awa.

[The poet's Arcadian communications with Clarinda were disturbed during the latter part of January, by certain unpleasant intelligence conveyed to him from some quarter. Allan Cunningham suggests that a rumor throwing doubts on the solvent condition of Mr. Creech's exchequer may have reached him; but Chambers, with more probability, thinks that the disturbing element came from Mauchline, in relation to the results of Jean Armour's renewed love-intercourse with him. On 22nd January, he thus wrote to Margaret Chalmers:—"I have this moment got a hint. . . . I fear I am something like—undone; but I hope for the best. Come stubborn pride, and unshrinking Resolution, accompany me through this, to me, miserable world! You must not desert me." &c.

On Monday 18th February, Burns left Edinburgh for Ayrshire; and on the following Monday, he set out for Dumfries-shire to inspect the farms offered to him by Mr. Miller of Dalswinton. By the 3rd of March, he was back to Mauchline, and on that day he wrote a remarkable letter to his friend Robert Ainslie, in which the following passage occurs:—"I have been through sore tribulation, and under much buffeting of the Wicked One, since I came to this country. Jean I found banished like a martyr—forlorn, destitute, and friendless, all for the good old cause. I have reconciled her to her fate: I have reconciled her to her mother: I have taken her a room: I have taken her to my arms: I have given her a mahogany bed," &c.

Chambers informs us "That when Jean was driven, in the middle of winter, from her parents' dwelling, she was by Burns's request sheltered by his friend Mrs. Muir, the wife of the honest

miller of Tarbolton alluded to in Dr. Hornbook. The poet now established her in a lodging in Mauchline, and succeeded in obtaining the benefit of her mother's attendance in her present delicate situation."

On the 10th of March, Burns returned to Edinburgh to execute the lease of Ellisland betwixt Mr. Miller and him; and while there, he accomplished two other important matters—the obtaining an order from the board of Excise for his formal instructions, and the adjustment of his accounts with Creech. While thus absent in Edinburgh, intelligence must have reached him from home, first of Jean's delivery of twin children, and secondly, of their death within a few days after birth. Chambers with great probability suggests that Jean Armour's condition above explained formed the pathetic subject of the ballad in the text.]

(Stenhouse says:—He took the first line, and even some hints of his verses, from an old song which begins:—

"How can I be blithe or in my mind contented be?"

The gloves and silken snoods were actual presents, we are told, to Jean Armour at this time. The snoods were a peculiarly appropriate gift, as it was through the poet Jean had lost the right to wear them. The lad "O'er the hills and far awa" was Burns himself when on his northern tour.—J. H.)

VERSES TO CLARINDA,

SENT WITH A PAIR OF WINE-GLASSES.

(Cromek, 1808.)

Fair Empress of the Poet's soul,
  And Queen of poetesses;
Clarinda, take this little boon,
  This humble pair of glasses:

And fill them up with generous juice,
  As generous as your mind;
And pledge them to the generous toast,
  "The whole of human kind!"

"To those who love us!" second fill;
But not to those whom *we* love;
Lest we love those who love not us—
A third—"to thee and me, love!"

[Burns, having arranged the various matters which brought him from Ayrshire to Edinburgh for a fortnight in the month of March, took a long farewell of Clarinda, and left for Glasgow, on Monday the 24th, *en route* for Dumfries-shire. It was on leaving Edinburgh at the period referred to, that he presented Clarinda with the parting gift which occasioned the above verses.]

THE CHEVALIER'S LAMENT.

Air—"Captain O'Kean."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

THE small birds rejoice in the green leaves returning,
The murmuring streamlet winds clear thro' the vale;
The primroses blow in the dews of the morning,
And wild scatter'd cowslips bedeck the green dale:
But what can give pleasure, or what can seem fair,
When the lingering moments are numbered by care?
No birds sweetly singing, nor flow'rs gaily springing,
Can soothe the sad bosom of joyless despair.

The deed that I dar'd, could it merit their malice?
A king and a father to place on his throne!
His right are these hills, and his right are these valleys,
Where the wild beasts find shelter, tho' I can find none!
But 'tis not my suff'rings thus wretched, forlorn;
My brave gallant friends, 'tis your ruin I mourn;
Your faith proved so loyal in hot-bloody trial—
Alas! can I make it no better return!

[It was during the rapid journey to and from Dumfries, referred to in our last note, that the opening stanza of the above song was composed. The day after his return home, the poet addressed a letter to his musical friend, Mr. Robert Cleghorn, of Saughton Mills, Edinburgh, in these terms:—"Yesterday, my dear sir, as I was riding through a track of melancholy, joyless muirs between Galloway and Ayrshire, it being Sunday, I turned my thoughts to psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; and your favorite air, *Captain O'Kean*, coming at length into my head, I tried these words to it," &c.]

(See letter to Mr. Robert Cleghorn, Saughton Mills, of date 31st March, 1788. The variations made on the stanza as sent to Mr. Cleghorn are slight, the principal being on the seventh line, which reads:—

"No flowers gaily springing, nor birds sweetly singing."

Mr. Cleghorn wrote in answer on the 27th April, expressing his high gratification with the lines, adding: "I wish you would send me a verse or two more; and, if you have no objection, I would have it in Jacobite style. Suppose it should be sung after the fatal field of Culloden, by the unfortunate Charles." It was in accordance with this request that Burns constructed his second stanza, giving a Jacobite ending to the fine pastoral commencement.—J. H.)

PROSE WORKS.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

OUR first volume brought us down to the date of the publication of the Kilmarnock Edition of Burns's Poems, July 31st, 1786. The present volume opens a new era in his life-history. He is no longer merely the "Bard of Coila" whose pieces are passing in manuscript through the hands of his brother bards, personal friends, or local patrons, such as Simson, Sillar, Rankine, Richmond, Gavin Hamilton, Ballantine, and Aiken. He has now taken the first decisive step towards his development into what he was soon afterwards to become, and to be recognized as being: —viz., THE NATIONAL BARD OF SCOTLAND.

But the stream of man's life is made up of various currents, sometimes running more or less apart, sometimes intermingling and lending color to each other. All the time the preparations for the Kilmarnock Edition were going on, Burns was the principal figure in what may be called a domestic tragedy. For the reader's clearer comprehension of the situation of affairs during this eventful period of the poet's life it is necessary that we should somewhat retrace our steps—and explain in one consecutive narrative the history of his connection with his future wife, Jean Armour, down to the date of their regular marriage. Closely interwoven with this connection is the episode of his

Pamage A Willmore

Mossgiel.

courtship of Highland Mary, which we introduce at its proper place.

With such a narrative, therefore, we open the prose portion of our Second Volume, which covers all the period between the appearance of the Kilmarnock Edition and the Poet's settlement at Ellisland.

JEAN ARMOUR.

"'Jean' Armour, wife of the Poet, and chief inspirer of his muse, was the daughter of Mr. James Armour, a master builder, or practical architect, at Mauchline. She was born there on 27th February, 1767,* and was formally acknowledged as the wife of Robert Burns in 1787. Her parents seem to have been of the strictest sect in their religion; so that her education and upbringing must have been all that could be desired in that respect. But the rigidness of their domestic discipline, and the pride which sometimes accompanies too great austerity of morals and purity of creed combined, were undoubtedly the cause of much of the pain and humiliation which attended her marriage with the Poet. This lady, so celebrated in the world of song, and so justly entitled to her own high pre-eminence there, although a good-looking woman, does not seem, to judge of her by any pictures we now possess, to have been what men commonly call beautiful. But she was elegant, sprightly, piquant, and fascinating. She has been celebrated by her husband in at least sixteen different effusions, songs or poems, and possibly in some others. The entire list we need not now specify; but some of these—such as 'Of a' the Airts the Wind can Blaw,' 'O were I on Parnassus Hill,' 'I'll aye ca' in by yon town,' &c., are unquestionably among the very finest lyrical compositions extant in any language. Yet it is remarkable that among the various epithets of admiration or endearment by which she is distinguished throughout, the distinctive appellation of 'Bonie Jean,' by

* We quote from Register in the Poet's Family Bible. The date is elsewhere given as 1765; and it seems to have been so entered in the Register, as the reader may observe by consulting the fac-simile; but the figure 5, or whatever other figure it might be, has been erased, apparently after some discussion or inquiry on the subject, and the figure 7 distinctly subjoined. Mrs. Burns, therefore, must have been two years younger than is commonly supposed.

which the world almost invariably now recognises her, does not occur once. The world, in this respect, seems to have fixed on a title for her, as it has also fixed on a likeness for her husband, neither of which is correct. Her 'bonie sel,' and her 'bonie face,' and her 'lovely form,' occur each once; and 'my bonie Jean,' which is a designation entirely different from 'Bonie Jean,' and implies the sacredness or exclusiveness of conjugal or betrothed love, occurs only in one song, 'I'll aye ca' in by yon town,' where it *repeats*, being in the last line of the chorus; and the same expression occurs also in the 'Vision,' where, however, it was substituted, on second thoughts, for 'Bess:' but all other epithets are different. She is 'dear' repeatedly, and 'dearer,' and 'doubly dear;' and 'darling,' and 'sweet,' and 'young,' and 'artless,' and 'tempting,' and most frequently of all, as it became a man sincerely and truly in love to call her—'*My* Jean.' This very title, indeed, he even gives her expressly in prose, when referring to his marriage, in his letter to Dr. Moore, as the title which really appertained to her most devoutly in his own heart; as also in the well-known lines—

> Miss Miller is fine, Miss Markland's divine,
> Miss Smith she has wit, and Miss Betty is braw,
> There's beauty and fortune to get wi' Miss Morton;
> But Armour's the jewel for me o' them a'.

No reason whatever for this decided preference was, or philosophically could be, assigned by him. Burns's love for, and attachment to, his wife, therefore, seems to have originated in some peculiar attractions, or combination of attractions, in herself—which he could not, any more than other true lovers, if called upon, have specified—but by which, and not by the mere external aspect of countenance called beautiful, he was fascinated and enthralled."—WADDELL.

The exact period when the Poet's future wife, Jean Armour, first attracted his attention cannot be exactly ascertained. We believe from a study of all references that it was sometime in the spring or summer of 1784 that they first met. She was then entering on her eighteenth year. On the information of Jean herself, Chambers records that on the night of Mauchline Races it was customary for the young men, with little cere-

mony, to invite agreeable girls, whom they might then fall in with, to join them in a "penny dance." Burns and Jean happened to meet in the same dance, but not as partners, when some confusion and merriment was caused by the poet's collie dog (probably Luath) tracking his footsteps through the hall. He was heard to remark to his partner that "he wished he could get any of the lasses to like him as well as his dog did." A few weeks after that Jean happened to be bleaching clothes at the public green, when Burns passed with his dog, and she archly asked him the question—"Have ye fa'n in wi' a lass yet to like you as weel as your dog?" From that moment their intimacy commenced. Her father's house was situated in close proximity to the Whitefoord Arms Inn, where the poet had frequent occasion to attend, as president of the Bachelor's Club, described in Vol. I., p. 156, so that flirtation was rendered easy.*

Old Armour seems not to have had a favorable idea

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* We have been favored by Mr. Moore, the venerable Editor of the *Lowell Morning Times*, with an account of the first meeting between Jean Armour and the poet, derived from Jean's sister. The account is quite in harmony with that given in the text. When clothes are being bleached they are subjected to many besprinklings from the watering-can, and this implies many journeys to the place where the "stoups" are filled. We give the narrative in Mr. Moore's own words.

"When a mere boy—which was over sixty years ago—I was a temporary resident in Mauchline, Ayrshire, and had the benefit of many motherly attentions from Mrs. Nelly Brown, who was a sister of Jean Armour, the wife of Robert Burns, of which kindnesses I have grateful memory. One day I met Mrs. Brown at the junction of the road leading towards Barskimming and the Main street of Mauchline leading towards Ayr, and had a conversation with her concerning a local family matter of a pleasant character. During our confab I asked her how Burns and her sister, Jean, became first acquainted, and her reply was this:—

"'D'ye see Tam McClellan's spout over the gate there? Weel, it was juist there whaur Rab an' Jean first foregather't. Her an' me had gaen there for a gang o' water, an' I had fill't my cans first, an' come ower here juist whaur you an' me's stan'in. When Jean was fillin' her stoups Rab Burns cam' up, an' began some nonsense or ither wi' her, an' they talked and leuch sae lang that it made me juist mad: to think, tae, that she should ha'e a word to say wi' sic a lowse character as Rab Burns. When she at last cam' ower I gied her a guid hecklin, trowth. Said I: "Jean, ye ocht to think black-burnin' shame o' yersel." Before bein' seen daffin wi' Rab Burns, woman, I would far raither been seen speakin' to a sodger." That was the beginning o' the unfortunate acquaintance.'"—G.

of Burns from the outset. Undoubtedly, by this time, the poet's amorous disposition was known in the neighborhood, for he was already the father of an illegitimate child, "His dear-bought Bess." In addition to this, Armour knew well enough that matters were not in a prosperous condition at Mossgiel. The harvest of 1785 was cold and late, and owing to the wretched weather half the crop was lost. Even before the result of Jean's intercourse with Burns became evident, his brother Gilbert tells us, that he and Robert were contemplating abandoning the lease of the farm:—

"When, therefore, the result of the connection between Jean and my brother *could no longer be concealed*, Robert durst not engage with his family in his poor unsettled state, but was anxious to shield his partner, by every means in his power, from the consequences of their imprudence. It was agreed therefore between them, that they should make a legal acknowledgment of an irregular and private marriage; that he should go to Jamaica to push his fortune; and that she should remain with her father till it might please Providence to put the means of supporting a family in his power.

"Mrs. Burns was a great favorite of her father's. The intimation of a marriage was the first suggestion he received of her real situation. He was in the greatest distress, and fainted away. The marriage did not appear to him to make the matter better. A husband in Jamaica appeared to him and his wife little better than none, and an effectual bar to any other prospects of a settlement in life that their daughter might have. They therefore expressed a wish to her, that the written papers which respected the marriage should be cancelled, and thus the marriage rendered void. In her melancholy state, she felt the deepest remorse at having brought such heavy affliction on parents that loved her so tenderly, and submitted to their entreaties. Their wish was mentioned to Robert. He felt the deepest anguish of mind. He offered to stay at home, and provide for his wife and family in the best manner that his daily labors could provide for them, that being the only means in his power. Even this offer they did not approve of; for humble as Miss Armour's station was, and great though her imprudence had been, she still, in the eyes of her partial parents, might look to a better connexion than that with

my friendless and unhappy brother, at that time without house or biding place."

It is curious to speculate at this point, how differently matters might have shaped themselves had Jean's "misfortune" been delayed a few months, say until after the publication of his Kilmarnock edition. As it was, Armour determined to prosecute Burns in legal form, and we learn from a letter from Burns to Mr. Ballantine of Ayr, that action had been taken against him by placing the matter in the hands of Mr. Aiken, writer, Ayr.

In his letter to Richmond from Old Rome, where he was in hiding, dated 30th July, 1786, Burns says, "Would you believe it, Armour has got a warrant to throw me into jail until I find security for an enormous sum." The condition of the poet's mind at this period will be better illustrated by a quotation from a letter to David Brice, June 12th, 1786: "What poor, ill-advised Jean thinks of her conduct, I do not know. She has made me completely miserable. Never man loved, or rather adored a woman more than I did her, and to confess the truth between you and me, I do still love her to distraction after all. I foresee she is on the road, I fear, to eternal ruin. May Almighty God forgive her injustice and perjury to me."

The complexion of the pieces produced at this time, as "Song Composed in Spring," the "Odes to Ruin and Despondency," "The Lament," and even "The Mountain Daisy," is a sufficient index of his mental condition. It has indeed been remarked that had Burns not had the resource of rhyme at this time, and the wholesome diversion of preparing his poems for the press and seeing them through, it is not improbable he might have ended in a mad-house.

Leaving Jean Armour for the present, we will now relate the story of Highland Mary, availing ourselves of Robert Chambers's version of that episode.

HIGHLAND MARY.

"The heart of man is full of mystery. Sometimes when it appears most keenly set upon one passion, it is at the nearest point to turning into some wholly different channel. Its reactions from wounded affection are amongst its most surprising transitions. Burns had been cast off by the Armours in what he felt as a most shameful way—divorced on account of poverty. In this moment of wounded pride he recalled the image of an amiable girl in the service of his friend Hamilton, a sweet, sprightly, blue-eyed creature, of a firmer modesty and self-respect than too many of the other maidens he had addressed. Mary Campbell was of Highland parentage, from the neighborhood of Dunoon, on the Firth of Clyde. Her father was a sailor in a revenue-cutter, the station of which being at Campbelton, in Kintyre, his family now resided there. We may presume that the young woman was somewhat superior in cast of mind, manners, and intelligence to her situation, as it is ascertained that she had spent some of her youthful years in the family of the Rev. David Campbell of Loch Ranza, in Arran, a relation of her mother. She had afterwards been induced by another relative, a Mrs. Isabella Campbell, who was housekeeper to a family in Ayrshire, to come to that county and take a situation as servant. There is some obscurity about the situations and movements of Mary: it is quite certain that she was at one time dairy-maid at Coilsfield, and the surviving children of Mr. Hamilton are probably right in thinking that she was nurse-maid to their deceased brother Alexander, who was born in July 1785, and that she saw him through some of the early stages of infancy before leaving their house. As a stranger serving only for a short time in the village, she has been little remembered there. Mrs. Begg recollects no sort of reference to her at Mossgiel, except from the poet himself, when he told John Blane one day that 'Mary had refused to meet him in the old castle'—the dismantled tower of the priory near Mr. Hamilton's house.

"Thrown off and heart-wrung as he was by Jean, it was natural enough that he should revert to Mary Campbell. On the eve of a voyage to the West Indies in a humble capacity, it was not desirable that he should unite himself with any woman, however dear; but his soul rushed to a compensation for the desertion of Armour; prudential considerations, as usual with him where affairs of the heart were concerned, formed little or no impediment—he betook himself to Mary, and found

her willing to be his for life, notwithstanding all that had passed with Jean. Such, at least is the view we take of the circumstances, from all that has transpired.

"It was agreed that Mary should give up her place, and go home for a short time to her friends in the Highlands, in order to arrange matters for her union with the poet. But before going—on the second Sunday of May, the 14th of the month—Mary and Burns had a farewell meeting in a sequestered spot on the banks of the Ayr. The day and the place are indicated by himself. It is probable that the lovers did not confine themselves to the banks of the Ayr, but digressed into the minor valley of the Faile, where the woods of Coilsfield compose many beautiful scenes. However this may be, Mr. Cromek tells that 'their adieu was performed with all those simple and striking ceremonials which rustic sentiment has devised to prolong tender emotions and to impose awe. The lovers stood on each side of a small purling brook—they laved their hands in the limpid stream—and holding a Bible between them, pronounced their vows to be faithful to each other.' Mary presented to her lover a plain small Bible in one volume. Burns returned the compliment with a more elegant one in two volumes. The whole ceremony speaks of such an extreme anxiety for the constancy of his new mistress, as might be expected of one who had just suffered from the perjury of another. The volumes given to Mary chanced to be preserved. On a blank-leaf in one of them is inscribed, in Burns's handwriting, 'And ye shall not swear by my name falsely—I am the Lord.'—Levit. xix. 12. On the second volume: 'Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shall perform unto the Lord thine oaths.' —Matth. v. 33. And on a blank-leaf his name had been inscribed, together with his *mason-mark*. The lovers parted never to meet again. (See Vol. I, p. 293.)

"Mary, we are to presume from the narration of the poet, had proceeded, immediately after their parting, to Campbelton, where her parents then resided. She had spent the summer there; but there is no evidence that she had taken any steps in arranging matters for a union with Burns, although it is believed that she received letters from him. After having spent the summer at home, she agreed, at the recommendation of her former patroness, Mrs. Isabella Campbell, to accept a new situation for the term beginning at Martinmas, in the family of a Colonel M'Ivor in Glasgow.

"A cousin of Mary's mother was the wife of one Peter Macpherson, a ship carpenter at Greenock. It being deter-

mined that her younger brother Robert should be entered with Macpherson as an apprentice, her father came to Greenock to make the proper arrangements, and Mary accompanied him, professedly on her way to Glasgow for the purpose of entering on her service with Colonel M'Ivor, but secretly perhaps with the further design of taking a final farewell of Burns when he should depart for the West Indies; for Burns has expressly said that she crossed the sea (the Firth of Clyde) to meet him. There was what is called a '*brothering-feast*' at Macpherson's, on Robert Campbell being admitted to the craft, and Mary gave her assistance in serving the company. Next morning the boy Robert was so indisposed as to be unable to go to his work. When Macpherson came home to breakfast, he asked what had detained him from the yard, and was told that the young man was very poorly. Mary jocularly observed that he had probably taken a little too much after supper last night, and Macpherson, to keep up the badinage, said: 'Oh, then, it is as well, in case of the worst, that I have agreed to purchase the lair in the kirk-yard;' referring to a place of sepulture which he had just secured for his family—a very important matter in Greenock, as there was then no resting-place for the remains of those who did not possess such property, except the corner assigned to strangers and paupers, or a grave obtained by favor from a friend.

"The young man's illness proved more serious than was at first supposed, and Mary attended him with great tenderness and assiduity. In a few days Robert began to recover, but at the same time Mary drooped, and became seriously unwell. Her friends believed that she suffered from the cast of an evil eye, and recommended her father to go to a cross-burn—that is, a place where two burns meet—and select seven smooth stones from the channel, boil them with new milk for a certain time, and then give her the milk to drink. It must be remembered that these were Highland people, and that the Highlanders are to this day full of superstitious notions. The drink was duly prepared, as had been recommended, and given to Mary; but her illness was soon declared to be a fever, of a malignant species, then prevalent in the town, and in a few days the poor girl died. She was buried in the lair which her relative had so recently bought, being the first of the family who was placed in it."

It is much to be regretted that we have no such exact details of the poet's courtship of Mary as we

have regarding his intercourse with Jean Armour. Strangely enough her name does not occur once in all his correspondence; yet it is clear enough that mid all the whirl of excitement caused by Jean's desertion and her father's prosecution—"doubling and dodging," as he himself expresses it, "to evade the merciless pack of the law,"—and amid all the throes and cares of authorship, he found time and opportunity to court, and win the heart of, this simple maid. Gilfillan tells that she is said not to have been personally graceful or feminine, but very sweet and artless. What the poet's exact plan for the future in regard to Mary was, it is not easy to determine, and it is equally hard to conjecture what her own project was. Burns made no secret of his Jamaica scheme in the songs he at this time addressed her.

> "O plight me your faith, my Mary,
> And plight me your lily-white hand;
> O plight me your faith, my Mary,
> Before I leave Scotia's strand."

* * * * * * *

Here it seems proper to intimate that the early editors of Burns were very much at sea regarding the exact date of this love episode.

Mr. R. Scott Douglas says:—"Highland Mary completely *stumbled* me, I tried every year in rotation from his time of puberty down to the said year, 1786, but in none of them could I get her to fit, and I found the table would do very well if I left her out altogether. The events of his early life I found scattered in confusion like a child's puzzle-map, and as piece after piece was joined to its proper place, I ever found, when the whole was united, that Mary was left out! Poor wandering spirit! like Noah's dove 'there was found no rest for the sole of her foot,' and yet I could not, like Noah, reach forth my hand and take her in. I began in truth to doubt her reality; the nursery-rhyme occurred to me—

> 'And she grew, and she grew to a milk-white doo,
> And she flew, and she flew to the lift sae blue,'

and there in the lift I left her—Mary in Heaven! The earth disowned her!"

In all the biographies of the Poet till within the last forty years, it is more or less assumed that "Highland Mary" was one of his earliest heroines. Cromek, indeed, who was the first to reveal her surname—Campbell—expressly says she was "the first object of the youthful poet's love." It was no doubt Burns himself who (probably with the view of saving his wife's feelings) misled his readers in regard to the date. . When he sent the thrilling dirge—"To Mary in Heaven"—to Thomson in November, 1792, he thus writes, truly enough :—"The subject is one of the most interesting of my youthful days;" but there is more dubiety in his words when he tendered to the same gentleman the song "Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary." "In *my very early years*," he says, "when I was thinking of going to the West Indies, I took the following farewell of a dear girl." Finally, in his note to the song "My Highland Lassie, O," in Glenriddell's interleaved copy of the *Museum*, we are startled by these words:—"This is a composition of mine in *very early* life before I was known at all in the world."

Dr. Currie does not expressly state the precise period of Burns's life, when this, the tenderest of his love attachments, intervened, nor indeed was it till 1850, that the question of its date received a fairly satisfactory solution, and one that subsequent editors have accepted. At a meeting of the Edinburgh Antiquarian Society in that year a paper was read by Mr. R. S. Douglas, to whose edition of Burns's Works we are so largely indebted, in which he treated this question at large and fixed on the spring of 1786 as the date of this episode, and the second Sabbath of May (the 14th) as the day of their parting. Since then, the question has been handled by others, especially by Robert Chambers, and it may be regarded as definitely settled. It may not be uninteresting to note some points con-

firmatory of this conclusion. (1) We find no trace whatever of Burns having had any design of leaving Scotland and going to the West Indies till the misfortunes of this spring (dire poverty at home and persecution by the Armours) drove him to despair. (2) The Songs "Will you go to the Indies, My Mary?" and "My Highland Lassie, O!" have no meaning except in connection with this purpose. (3) Chambers tells us, on the authority of surviving children of Gavin Hamilton, that Mary Campbell was nursemaid to their brother Alexander, born in July, 1785. At the Martinmas term of that year, that is, about the middle of November, Mary left Gavin Hamilton's service, and went to serve as dairymaid at Coilsfield House. The second Sunday of May, when Burns and she met for the last time, must, therefore, have been in 1786. (4) It has been well established that Mary Campbell died at Greenock of a malignant fever that was raging in that town, at the time she was making a temporary sojourn in it on her way towards Glasgow; and it is equally well-established that the year of this "awfu' fever" was 1786. (5) Mary was interred in a "lair" or burial lot in the churchyard of Greenock, belonging to the relative (Peter Macpherson, ship-carpenter) in whose house she died. The Register of "lairs" for the burgh of Greenock, proves that this "lair" was transferred to Peter Macpherson on October 12th, 1786. There is subsidiary evidence, such as the word "Mossgiel" which can be easily traced on the fly-leaf of the Bible presented by Burns to Mary,* tending to corroborate this view, but as it is now adopted by every competent judge, so far as we know, we do not adduce them. Any one of the above reasons seems to be conclusive. It may be mentioned that Robert Chambers and Professor Wilson, though more or less com-

* See Vol. I., pp. 292, 293.

mitted by their previous writings, to an opposite view, have both declared their concurrence in the conclusion arrived at by Mr. Douglas, the former gentleman indeed contributing some of the weightiest arguments in support of it. Most important of all, he states that on the question being fairly submitted to the poet's sister, Mrs. Begg, she acknowledged the correctness of the conclusions arrived at from the above *data*, and added that the facts *had been all along known to the family.* In the face of facts such as those stated above, no argument of value can be drawn from Burns's having afterwards spoken of the attachment as being in "his very early years." If, as we have already suggested, this statement was made with the view of sparing his wife's feelings, most persons will be willing to regard the error as a very venial one.

Having thus exhibited the evidence in which this most interesting episode is fixed as occurring in the Spring of 1786, we turn now to another question which we have not hitherto seen treated: viz., what was the duration of the poet's loving relation to Mary? That he was acquainted with her from the time she came to serve in the family of his friend Gavin Hamilton, there can be no rational doubt. Some even affirm that he paid her attention when she resided in that gentleman's family, but was repulsed or coldly met on account of his well-known relationship to Jean Armour. It was after she had left Mauchline and had gone to reside at Coilsfield on the banks of the Faile, that Burns, seeking consolation and compensation for the loss of Jean, and actuated, we cannot but suspect, somewhat by a desire for revenge, really made love to her. The commencement of this renewed intercourse with, and only real courtship of, Mary may reasonably be fixed at the date when Jean's condition became known to her parents and the Poet was spurned from

their house. Unfortunately no date is attached to the fragment of a letter addressed to Smith (Vol. 1, p. 383), acknowledging that the Poet himself was then aware of Jean's condition and had given her a written acknowledgment of marriage. We find from a letter to Mr. Ballantine, Ayr, of date 14th May, 1786 (Vol. 1, p. 386), that on the preceding day—the 13th—Mr. Armour had employed Mr. Aiken, writer, Ayr, to take legal proceedings against the Poet. Waddell states that the rupture with Jean Armour, and what he calls the dissolution of the marriage, took place in March. Assuming this to be the case, we come to the conclusion that the courtship of Mary lasted at longest not more than two months, probably not quite so long. But Burns was a man of strong passions and fiery impulses, and was likely resolved to bring matters to a climax. After, therefore, what he naïvely calls "a pretty long tract of reciprocal attachment," he offered himself to the Coilsfield dairymaid and was accepted.

One other point which has been little noticed—or rather never, so far as we have seen—deserves attention here. Did Burns deceive Mary, in regard to his relation to Jean Armour? We think he could not have done so had he been willing. Mary had lived in Mauchline, a village then of some five hundred inhabitants. Burns was the person who attracted most attention in all the neighborhood. His connection with Jean Armour was matter of notoriety. In his "Epistle to Davie" (Vol. 1, p. 86), dated so far back as January, 1785, he says:—

> "Ye hæ your Meg, your dearest part,
> And I, my darling Jean . . .
> It lightens, it brightens
> The tenebrific scene,
> To meet with and greet with
> My Davie and my Jean."

Nay, even earlier than this he tells us in the "Belles o' Mauchline" that

"Armour's the jewel for me of them a'."

The first rencontre with Jean is thus fixed for the summer of 1784 (Vol. 1, p. 72. Note to "The Mauchline Lady".) All the village knew of the bard's connection with Jean Armour, its consequences, and the rupture. Even at Coilsfield, Mary was within an hour's walk of Mauchline and Mossgiel; and in country districts, gossip—especially love-gossip—travels fast. Mary Campbell, therefore, could hardly help but know Burns's reasons for reverting to her. We therefore conclude that she must have accepted him with her eyes open; and on the second Sabbath of May (May 14th), 1786, was enacted the solemn scene of betrothal. And here we cannot but intercalate one reflection. Scarcely could a poorer couple than these two that stood on this Sabbath afternoon on the opposite banks of the rivulet, to plight their faith, be found on all the earth's wide round. Yet what pompous ceremonial of betrothment between personages of royal, or imperial, rank can vie with this simple ceremony in engrossing the interest of the world? Celebrated and embalmed by genius, it is not only world-wide, but it is immortal.

Mrs. Jameson in her "Loves of the Poets" says:—"Mary Campbell was a poor peasant girl whose life had been spent in servile offices, who walked probably barefoot to that meeting on the Banks of the Ayr, which her lover has recorded. But Mary Campbell will live to memory while the music and language of her country endure. Helen of Greece, and Queen Dido of Carthage are not more surely immortalized than this plebeian girl. The scene of parting love on the banks of the Ayr, that spot where 'the golden hours on angel wings' hovered over Burns and his Mary, is classic ground, and like the copy of Virgil in which Petrarch noted down the death of Laura, which many have made a pilgrimage to look upon, even

such a relic shall be the Bible of Highland Mary, and many shall gaze, with glistening eyes, on the handwriting of him—who, by the mere power of truth and passion, shall live in all hearts to the end of time."

Professor Wilson, in his celebrated essay on Burns thus speaks of the parting of the lovers: "Many such partings have there been between us poor beings—blind at all times, and often blindest in our bliss—but all gone to oblivion. But that scene can never die! That scene will live forever. Immortal the two shadows standing there holding together the Bible, a little rivulet flowing between, in which, as in consecrated water, they have dipt their hands—water not purer than, at this moment, their united hearts." "The scene" to quote from an eloquent article by Dr. Carruthers, "sheds an indescribable charm over our poetical history and over the present life of Scotland: it falls on the heart like Sabbath sunshine which hallowed the woods, the stream, the parting hour; and, for once, we see genius, virtue, and beauty in perfect union, irradiated with light from heaven."

[We now resume publication of the Poet's Correspondence, inserting, however, the following letter to an anonymous Ayrshire lady, somewhat in advance of its presumed date, as exhibiting the state of Burns's heart after being renounced by Jean Armour. We are inclined to believe that this letter was addressed to Miss Peggy Chalmers, but of course this is matter of conjecture.—J. H.]

(1) TO MISS ——, AYRSHIRE.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

MY DEAR COUNTRYWOMAN: I am so impatient to show you that I am once more at peace with you, that I send you the book I mentioned, directly, rather than wait the uncertain time of my seeing you. I am afraid I have mislaid or lost Collins's Poems, which I promised to Miss Irvin. If I can find them, I will forward them by you; if not, you must apologize for me.

I know you will laugh at it when I tell you that your piano and you together have played the deuce somehow about my heart. My breast has been widowed these many months,* and I thought myself proof against the fascinating witchcraft, but I am afraid you will "feelingly convince me what I am," I say I am afraid, because I am not sure what is the matter with me. I have one miserable bad symptom; when you whisper, or look kindly to another, it gives me a draught of damnation. I have a kind of wayward wish to be ten minutes by yourself, though what I would say, Heaven above knows, for I am sure I know not. I have no formed design in all this; but just in the nakedness of my heart, write you down a mere matter-of-fact story. You may perhaps give yourself airs of distance on this, and that will completely cure me; but I wish you would not: just let us meet, if you please, in the old beaten way of friendship.†

I will not subscribe myself your humble servant, for that is a phrase I think, at least fifty miles off from the heart; but I will conclude with sincerely wishing that the Great Protector of innocence may shield you from the barbed dart of Calumny, and hand you by the covert snare of deceit. R. B.‡

(2) TO MR. DAVID BRICE, SHOEMAKER, GLASGOW.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

MOSSGIEL, *July* 1786.

I HAVE been so throng (busy) printing my Poems, that I could scarcely find as much time as to write to

* This expression may refer to the fact, before noticed, that he had relinquished his courtship of Peggy Thomson. On the other hand, if we are to assume a later date, we may probably infer that "Peggy Chalmers" was the lady thus addressed, in 1787.

† This expression—"the beaten way of friendship" occurs in the poet's letter to his cousin, 25th Septr. 1786, and also in a letter to "Clarinda."

‡ The reader can hardly fail to be struck with the similiarity of style between the conclusion of this letter and the close of that addressed to Miss Kennedy.

you. Poor Armour is come back again to Mauchline, and I went to call for her, and her mother forbade me the house, nor did she herself express much sorrow for what she has done. I have already appeared publicly in church, and was indulged in the liberty of standing in my own seat. I do this to get a certificate as a bachelor, which Mr. Auld has promised me. I am now fixed to go for the West Indies in October. Jean and her friends insisted much that she should stand along with me in the kirk, but the minister would not allow it, which bred a great trouble I assure you, and I am blamed as the cause of it, though I am sure I am innocent; but I am very much pleased, for all that, not to have had her company. I have no news to tell you that I remember. I am really happy to hear of your welfare, and that you are so well in Glasgow. I must certainly see you before I leave the country. I shall expect to hear from you soon, and am, dear Brice, yours, ROBT. BURNS.

The following deed of assignment, made by the poet in view of going to the West Indies, in favor of his brother Gilbert, of all his earthly possessions, including "the profits that may arise from the publications of my Poems presently in the press," tells its own tale. His fatherly care for the welfare of his former illegitimate child—"Wee image of my bonie Betty," in contrast to his contemptuous disregard of Jean's forthcoming blossom, must have been intended as a severe cut to the Armours.

KNOW all men by these presents, that I, Robert Burns in Mossgiel: whereas I intend to leave Scotland and go abroad, and having acknowledged myself the father of a child named Elizabeth, begot upon Elizabeth Paton in Largieside: and whereas Gilbert Burns in Mossgiel, my brother, has become bound, and hereby binds and oblidges himself to aliment, clothe, and educate my said natural child in a suitable manner as if she was his own, in case her Mother chuse to part

with her, and that until she arrive at the age of fifteen years. Therefore, and to enable the said Gilbert Burns to make good his said engagement, wit ye me to have assigned, disponed, conveyed, and made over to, and in favors of, the said Gilbert Burns, his Heirs, Executors, and Assignees, who are always to be bound in like manner with himself, all and sundry Goods, Gear, Corns, Cattle, Horses, Nolt, Sheep, Household furniture, and all other movable effects of whatever kind that I shall leave behind me on my departure from the kingdom, after allowing for my part of the conjunct debts due by the said Gilbert Burns and me as joint tacksmen of the farm of Mossgiel. And particularly, without prejudice of the foresaid generality, the profits that may arise from the publication of my Poems presently in the press—And also, I hereby dispone and convey to him in trust for behoof of my said natural daughter, the Copyright of said Poems, in so far as I can dispose of the same by law, after she arrives at the above age of fifteen years complete—Surrogating and Substituting the said Gilbert Burns, my brother, and his foresaids, in my full right, title, room, and place of the whole premises, with power to him to intromit with, and dispose upon the same at pleasure, and in general to do every other thing in the premises that I could have done myself before granting hereof, but always with and under the conditions before expressed—and I oblidge myself to warrand this disposition and assignation from my own proper fact and deed allenarly—Consenting to the Registration hereof in the Books of Council and Session, or any other Judges Books competent, therein to remain for preservation, and constitute . . . . Procutars, &c.

In witness whereof I have wrote and signed these presents, consisting of this and the preceeding page, on stamped paper, with my own hand, at Mossgiel,

the twenty-second day of July, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-six years.

ROBERT BURNS.*

(3) TO JOHN RICHMOND, EDINBURGH.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

OLD ROME FOREST,† 30*th July*, 1786.

MY DEAR RICHMOND,—My hour is now come—you and I will never meet in Britain more. I have orders, within three weeks at farthest, to repair aboard the Nancy, Captain Smith, from Clyde to Jamaica, and to call at Antigua. This, except to our friend Smith, whom God long preserve, is a secret about Mauchline. Would you believe it? Armour has got a warrant to throw me in jail till I find security for an enormous sum. This they keep an entire secret, but I got it by a channel they little dream of; and I am wandering from one friend's house to another, and, like a true son of the gospel, "have no where to lay my head." I know you will pour an execration on her head, but spare the poor, ill-advised girl, for my sake; though, may all the furies that rend the injured, enraged lover's bosom, await her mother until her latest hour! I write in a moment of rage, reflecting on my miserable situation—exiled, abandoned, forlorn. I can write no more—let me hear from you by the return of coach. I will write you ere I go,—I am, dear Sir, yours here and hereafter, R. B.

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* This document is here printed *verbatim et literatim* from a well executed facsimile of the original MS. Cunningham was the first to include it in an edition of the Poet's Works. Legal intimation of the assignment was duly made on 24th July, by William Chalmers, N.P., at the Market Cross of Ayr.

† "Old Rome Forest" is in the neighborhood of Kilmarnock, at which place resided a relative of the poet, and who took charge of his travelling chest. This explains the passage in the Autobiography:—"My chest was on the road to Greenock."

The day after the preceding letter was penned, John Wilson, Printer in Kilmarnock, began to issue subscription copies of the precious volume of Scottish Poems, which his press had been honored to print. We gather the following interesting particulars concerning the distribution of that eagerly longed-for Book, from the careful printer's own memoranda, now or lately in the possession of Robert Cole, Esq., London.

On 31st July 1786, one copy was delivered to Mr. Aiken of Ayr: on 5th August he received 12 copies: on 10th August, 20 copies: on 12th August, 40 copies: on 14th August, 36 copies; and on 16th August, 36 copies—in all 145 copies, being nearly one fourth of the whole impression.*

On 2nd August, Mr. Robert Muir of Kilmarnock obtained two copies; and between that and 17th August, he received 70 more. In referring to that circumstance, Mr. Gilbert Burns made the mistake of setting down the name of Mr. Wm. Parker, for that of Robert Muir.

On 4th August, Mr. James Smith of Mauchline received one copy; and on the 8th of that month he obtained 40 more. On 18th August, 40 copies were delivered to Mr. Gavin Hamilton of Mauchline. Burns himself, on three several occasions, obtained one copy; namely on 3rd, 4th and 5th of August. Gilbert Burns obtained 70 copies for distribution during August; and a like number was distributed by John Wilson, the printer of the volume.

Besides copies supplied to William Parker, Thomas Samson, Ralph Sellars, and John Rankine of Adamhill, the following persons obtained the number of copies attached to their respective names:—John Kennedy, Dumfries House, 20; John Logan of Laight, 20; Mr. M'Whinnie, Writer, Ayr, 20; David Sillar, Irvine, 14; William Niven, Maybole, 7; Walter Morton, Cumnock, 6; John Neilson, Kirkoswald, 5.

On 28th August, less than a month after the volume was printed, 559 copies had been disposed of, and only 15 remained on hand. Indeed, so scarce did the volume become, that the poet's brothers and sisters at Mossgiel had not an opportunity of reading the poems in print, until they were furnished with a copy of the Edinburgh edition.

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* The intelligent reader will be inclined to speculate in regard to the reason which could have induced Burns to entrust Mr. Aiken with 145 copies, amounting at 3 shillings to the, to him, considerable sum of £21, 15, since Mr. A. as agent for the Armours in their case against the poet, could have impounded the whole amount. We believe the reason to have been that Burns relied implicitly on the gentleman's honor.—J. H.

(4) TO MR. JOHN KENNEDY, DUMFRIES HOUSE.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

KILMARNOCK, *August*, 1786.

MY DEAR SIR,—Your truly facetious epistle of the 3rd inst. gave me much entertainment. I was only sorry I had not the pleasure of seeing you as I passed your way, but we shall bring up all our leeway on Wednesday, the 16th current, when I hope to have it in my power to call on you and take a kind, very probably a last adieu, before I go for Jamaica; and I expect orders to repair to Greenock every day. I have at last made my public appearance, and am solemnly inaugurated into the numerous class. Could I have got a carrier, you should have had a score of vouchers for my Authorship; but now you have them, let them speak for themselves.

Farewell, dear Friend! may gude luck hit you,
And 'mang her favorites admit you!
If e'er Detraction shore to smit you,
May nane believe him!
And ony deil that thinks to get you,
Good Lord deceive him.

R. B.

(1) TO JOHN LOGAN, Esq., OF LAIGHT.*

(DR. WADDELL'S ED., 1867.)

SIR,—I gratefully thank you for your kind offices in promoting my subscription, and still more for your

* This is the gentleman referred to in John Wilson's memoranda above quoted. In connexion with "The Kirk's Alarm," he is spoken of as John Logan of Knockshinnoch.

very friendly letter.—The first was doing me a favor, but the last was doing me an honor.—I am in such a bustle at present, preparing for my West-India voyage, as I expect a letter every day from the master of the vessel, to repair directly to Greenock; that I am under a necessity to return you the subscription bills, and trouble you with the quantum of copies till called for, or otherwise transmitted to the Gentlemen who have subscribed. Mr. Bruce Campbell is already supplied with two copies, and I here send you 20 copies more.—If any of the Gentlemen are supplied from any other quarter, 'tis no matter; the copies can be returned.

If orders from Greenock do not hinder, I intend doing myself the honor of waiting on you, Wednesday the 16th Inst.

I am much hurt, Sir, that I must trouble you with the copies; but, circumstanced as I am, I know no other way your friends can be supplied.—I have the honor to be, Sir, your much indebted humble Servant, ROBERT BURNS.

KILMARNOCK, 10*th Aug.* 1786.

(2) TO MONS. JAMES SMITH, MAUCHLINE.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

MONDAY MORNING, 14th *Aug.* 1786.

MY DEAR SIR,—I went to Dr. Douglas yesterday, fully resolved to take the opportunity of Captain Smith: but I found the Doctor with a Mr. and Mrs. White, both Jamaicans, and they have deranged my plans altogether. They assure him that to send me from Savannah la Mar to Port Antonio will cost my master, Charles Douglas, upwards of fifty pounds; besides running the risk of throwing myself into a pleuritic

fever, in consequence of hard travelling in the sun.* On these accounts, he refuses sending me with Smith, but a vessel sails from Greenock the first of September, right for the place of my destination. The Captain of her is an intimate friend of Mr. Gavin Hamilton's, and as good a fellow as heart could wish; with him I am destined to go. Where I shall shelter, I know not, but I hope to weather the storm. Perish the drop of blood of mine that fears them! I know their worst, and am prepared to meet it:—

> "I'll laugh, an' sing, an' shake my leg,
> As lang's I dow."

On Thursday morning, if you can muster as much self-denial as to be out of bed about seven o'clock, I shall see you as I ride through to Cumnock. After all, Heaven bless the sex! I feel there is still happiness for me among them:—

> "O woman, lovely woman! Heaven designed you
> To temper man!—we had been brutes without you."

R. B.

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* Dr. Currie printed in the correspondence of the poet, a letter addressed to the latter by an early acquaintance, a Mr. John Hutchinson, who had gone to reside in the West Indies It is dated "Jamaica, St. Anns, 14 June 1787," and thus proceeds:—"I received yours wherein you acquaint me you were engaged with Mr. Douglas, Port Antonio, for three years, at Thirty pound Stg. a-year; and am happy that some unexpected accident intervened to prevent your sailing with the vessel, as I have great reason to think Mr. Douglas's employ would by no means have answered your expectations. I received a copy of your publication, for which I return you my thanks, and it is my own opinion, as well as that of such of my friends as have seen the poems, that they are most excellent in their kind. . . . . I can by no means advise you now to think of coming to the West Indies, as, I assure you, there is no encouragement for a man of learning and genius here; and am very confident you can do far better in Great Britain than in Jamaica. . . . . I will esteem it a particular favor if you will send me a copy of the other edition you are now printing.'

(1) TO MONS. THOMAS CAMPBELL, PENCLOE.

(Dr. Waddell's Ed., 1867.)

[New Cumnock, 19*th Aug.* 1786.]

My dear Sir,—I have met with few men in my life whom I more wished to see again than you, and Chance seems industrious to disappoint me of that pleasure. I came here yesterday fully resolved to see you and Mr. Logan, at New Cumnock; but a conjuncture of circumstances conspired against me. Having an opportunity of sending you a line, I joyfully embrace it. It is perhaps the last mark of our friendship you can receive from me on this side of the Atlantic.

Farewell! May you be happy up to the wishes of parting Friendship! Robert Burns.

Mr. J. Merry's, *Saturday Morn.**

(1) TO WILLIAM NIVEN, MERCHT., MAYBOLE.

Care of Thomas Piper, Surgeon—to be left at Dr. Charles's Shop, Ayr.

(Douglas, 1877.)

My dear Friend,—I have been very throng (busy) ever since I saw you, and have not got the whole of my promise performed to you; but you know the old proverb, "The break o' a day's no the break o' a bargain." Have patience and I will pay you all.

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* The wife of this landlord at New Cumnock was Anne Rankine, a daughter of the waggish farmer at Adamhill. She long survived her husband, and used to sing to her customers Burns's song, "The Rigs o' barley," with an overpowering pipe, and quietly hint that she herself was the "Annie" of the song.

I thank you with the most heartfelt sincerity for the worthy knot of lads you introduced me to. Never did I meet with so many congenial souls together, without one dissonant jar in the concert. To all and each of them make my friendly compliments, particularly "Spunkie youth, Tammie."* Remember me in the most respectful manner to the Bailie, and Mrs. Niven,† to Mr. Dun,‡ and the two truly worthy old gentlemen I had the honor of being introduced to on Friday; tho' I am afraid the conduct you forced me on may make them see me in a light I would fondly think I do not deserve.

I will perform the next of my promise soon; in the meantime, remember this—never blaze my Songs among the million, as I would abhor to hear every prentice mouthing my poor performances in the streets. Every one of my Maybole friends is welcome to a copy if they chuse; but I don't wish them to go farther. I mean it as a small token of my respect for them—a respect as sincere as the love of dying saints.—I am ever, my d^r^. W^m^., your obliged.

ROBERT BURNS.

MOSSGIEL, 30*th August*, 1786.

The foregoing very interesting letter we believe still exists in a very dilapidated condition: it was printed—as an appendix to a small pamphlet of twenty-four pages, entitled "The real Souter Johnny," published at Maybole in 1834. Friday the 28th of August was the day on which Burns had the jovial meeting with the Carrick friends referred to in the letter. He was then on his return home from a southward journey collecting the subscription money due by the subscribers to his volume. On Thursday, 17th August (as we learn from the above letter to Smith), he was to be in Mauchline at early morn, as he "rode through to Cumnock"—a day

* "Spunkie Tammie," Alias Thomas Piper, was a young professional assistant of the late Hugh Logan, M.D., long the only medical practitioner in Maybole and neighborhood. "Spunkie" went afterwards to Jamaica where he died.

† The "Bailie and Mrs. Niven" were the parents of his correspondent.

‡ Mr. Dun was the then parochial teacher of Maybole.

later than he had anticipated in his letter to John Kennedy.—Leaving Cumnock on the 19th he seems to have made a circuit in the seaward direction, and tarried for some days in the locality of his maternal relatives. One special copy of his book he brought with him carefully inscribed to his old sweetheart, "Kirkoswald Peggy," now the wife of his own early acquaintance, John Neilson. That Inscription, with a relative note in Burns's autograph, is thus carefully engrossed in the Glenriddell volume of MS. poems:—"Written on the blank leaf of a copy of the first Edition of my Poems, which I presented to an Old Sweetheart, then married.

Once fondly loved and still remember'd dear, &c.
(See p. 15, *supra*.)

'Twas the girl I mentioned in my letter to Dr. Moore, where I speak of taking the sun's altitude. Poor Peggy! Her husband is my old acquaintance and a most worthy fellow. When I was taking leave of my Carrick relations, intending to go to the West Indies, when I took farewell of her, neither she nor I could speak a syllable. Her husband escorted me three miles on my road, and we both parted with tears."

Chambers gives the following particulars regarding the poet's halt at Maybole on this occasion, which are not inconsistent with the contents of his letter to Niven. It is clear, however, that Burns performed this pretty extensive journey on a good horse; and it is more than likely that his saddle-bags were well filled with copies of his volume for distribution in out-of-the-way localities. All this renders the idea of Chambers, that most of the journey was performed on foot, more than dubious. Nevertheless we quote his interesting account:—"In the course of his rounds Burns came to Maybole, where his Kirkoswald friend, Willie Niven, had been doing what he could for the sale of his book. The bard was in the highest spirits, for, as he acknowledged, he had never before been in possession of so much ready cash. Willie assembled a few choice spirits at the King's Arms to do honor to the bard; and they spent a night together, Burns being, as usual, the life and soul of the party. He had, as we know, heavy griefs hanging at his heart; but amongst genial men, over a glass of Scotch drink, no pain could long molest him. Comic verses flashed from his mouth *al improviso*, to the astonishment of the company, all of whom felt that a paragon of mirthful genius had come before them.

"In the pride of his heart next morning, he determined on hiring from his host a certain poor hack mare, well known along the whole road from Glasgow to Portpatrick as a beast that could now do little better than 'hoyte and hoble, and wintle like a sawmont coble.' Willie and a few others of his Maybole friends walked out of town before him, for the purpose of taking leave at a particular spot; and before he came up, they had, by way of keeping up the style of the preceding evening, prepared a few mock heroics in which to bid him speed on his journey. Burns received their salute with a subdued merriment; and when their spokesman had done, broke out with—'What need of all this fine parade of verse, my friends? It would have been quite enough if you had said just this—

> 'Here comes Burns on his Rosinante;
> She's d——d poor, but he's d——d canty!'

And then he went on his way."

The reader, of course, will understand that the "Willie Niven" of Chambers's anecdote was the individual to whom the poet's letter of 30th August, above given, is addressed. Ever since the memorable summer spent at Kirkoswald in 1775, Burns and he had been friends and occasional correspondents, and when Niven commenced business in Maybole, it is said that our poet addressed to him a poetical *memento* giving appropriate advice, headed with the motto from Blair's Grave.

> "Friendship! mysterious cement of the soul,
> Sweet'ner of life and solder of society."

Unfortunately, none of those early letters of Burns, nor the alleged poem have been produced; but Niven, who by steady application to trade, eventually realized a handsome fortune, and became a landed proprietor, maintained to his dying day that when he first inspected Burns's Kilmarnock volume, he was so mortified to find, in the "Epistle to a young friend," inscribed to Andrew Aiken, merely a slightly altered version of the one which had been addressed to himself a year or two previously, that he resolved thenceforth to have nothing more to say to such a weathercock friend. How much of truth may be in this allegation it is impossible to determine; but if true, Niven was absurdly intolerant and exacting. Dr. Waddell, who seems to have personally known the successful trader in his old age, says on this point:—"The gentleman doubtless had confidence enough to claim any sort of moral or social rela-

tionship to Burns that would exalt himself; but how he could ever be the bosom-friend of such a man, or entitled to the honor of an endearing epistle from him, is to us incomprehensible, except on the principle of some involuntary assimilation of antipathies." *

THE "THIRD OF LIBRA," AND ITS RESULTS.

An event was about to happen in Mauchline, which had the effect of considerably allaying the tempest in the poet's mind that manifested itself in his letters to John Richmond and to James Smith, above given. On Sunday the 3rd of September 1786, Burns made his way to the forenoon service in Mauchline church, but first called, on his road thither, upon his friend Gavin Hamilton, who asked the poet to bring him a poetical note of the sermon.

In the absence of Mr. Auld, the pulpit was supplied on that occasion by the Rev. James Steven, afterwards preacher to a Scotch congregation in London, and ultimately minister of Kilwinning parish. Burns returned to Mr. Hamilton's house after the service, where he found Mr. Mackenzie, surgeon, in attendance. He produced four stanzas of his now well-known poem, called "The Calf," which he read to his two friends, and Mr. Mackenzie having begged a copy of the lines, the author promised to forward them to him in the evening, which promise he more than performed, accompanied with the following note:—

JOHN MACKENZIE, ESQ., SURGEON, MAUCHLINE.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

DR. SIR,—I am afraid the foregoing scrawl will be scarce intelligible.

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* See the "Life and Works of Robert Burns, by P. Hately Waddell, LL.D.," 1874. He also adds that in his native district, Niven "officiated as magistrate for many years, with an assumption of importance that exposed him occasionally to not a little popular ridicule." He moreover remarks that "from a very early age, Niven seems to have manifested the prudential, money-making faculty, and therefore it is extremely unlikely that Burns would throw away so much excellent advice on an acquaintance whose own worldly sagacity so little required it."

The fourth and the last stanzas are added since I saw you to day. I am ever, Dear Sir, Yours,

8 o'clock, P. M. ROBT. BURNS.

While the poet had been musing over "The Calf" in church, all unconscious of what was being at that moment transacted, not two hundred yards from the pew in which he sat, it now appears that at "a quarter past Noon" of that Sunday, his Jean was delivered of twin children—a boy and a girl. Chambers, on the information of Mrs. Begg, records that not until the evening, did a message arrive at Mossgiel with the intelligence. How the news affected Burns is amusingly displayed in the following note which he immediately scrawled and posted.

(4) TO MR. JOHN RICHMOND, EDINBURGH.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

WISH me luck, dear Richmond! Armour has just brought me a fine boy and girl at one throw. God bless the little dears!

'Green grow the rashes, O,
Green grow the rashes, O,
A feather bed is no sae saft,
As the bosoms o' the lasses, O.'

ROBT. BURNS.

MOSSGIEL,
Sunday, 3rd Sep. 1786.

An arrangement by compromise was come to betwixt the poet's family and the Armours (somewhat corresponding with the famous "Judgment of Solomon") whereby the twin-burden was divided equally between the two hitherto contending families—the girl was retained and nursed by Jean, while the boy was sent to Mossgiel to be reared by *pap and spoon* under the care of the poet's mother and sisters.

(2) TO MR. ROBERT MUIR, KILMARNOCK.

With a copy of "The Calf."

(Cunningham, 1834.)

Mossgiel, *Friday Morning*,
[*Sep. 8th* 1786.]

My Friend and Brother.—Warm recollections of an absent friend presses so hard upon my heart, that I send him the prefixed bagatelle, pleased with the thought that it will greet the man of my bosom, and be a kind of distant language of friendship.

You will have heard that poor Armour has repaid me double. A very fine boy and a girl have awakened a thought and feelings that thrill, some with tender pressure, and some with foreboding anguish, through my soul.

The poem was nearly an extemporaneous production, on a wager with Mr. Hamilton that I would not produce a poem on the subject in a given time.

If you think it worth while, read it to Charles [Samson], and Mr. W. Parker; and if they choose a copy of it, it is at their service, as they are men whose friendship I shall be proud to claim, both in this world and that which is to come.

I believe all hopes of staying at home will be abortive, but more of this when, in the latter part of next week, you shall be troubled with a visit from—my dear Sir, your most devoted, R. B.

The following letter of Dr. Thomas Blacklock, the blind poet of Edinburgh, being of so much consequence in this part of the Biography of Burns, cannot well be omitted here. Dr. Lawrie would seem to have retained it in his possession for at least a fortnight before he sent it, or a copy thereof, to Mr. Hamilton, in order that it might be handed to Burns. We have seen, in the last letter to Muir, that the poet proposed

to be in Kilmarnock about the middle of September, during which visit, it is supposed he composed "Tam Samson's Elegy." Before the end of that month he is again found at Mossgiel.

TO MR. GEORGE LAWRIE, V.D.M.,

ST. MARGARET'S HILL, KILMARNOCK.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

EDIN., *Sep. 4th* 1786.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I ought to have acknowledged your favor long ago, not only as a testimony of your kind remembrance, but as it gave me an opportunity of sharing one of the finest, and perhaps one of the most genuine, entertainments of which the human mind is susceptible. A number of avocations retarded my progress in reading the Poems; at last, however, I have finished that pleasing perusal. Many instances have I seen of Nature's force and beneficence exerted under numerous and formidable disadvantages; but none equal to that with which you have been kind enough to present me. There is a pathos and delicacy in his serious poems, a vein of wit and humor in those of a more festive turn, which cannot be too much admired, nor too warmly approved; and I think I shall never open the book without feeling my astonishment renewed and increased. It was my wish to have expressed my approbation in verse; but whether from declining life, or a temporary depression of spirits, it is at present out of my power to accomplish that agreeable intention.

Mr. Stewart, Professor of Morals in this University, had formerly read me three of the poems, and I had desired him to get my name inserted among the subscribers; but whether this was done or not I could never learn. I have little intercourse with Dr. Blair, but will take care to have the Poems communicated to him by the intervention of some mutual friend. It has been told me by a gentleman to whom I shewed the performances, and who sought a copy with diligence and ardor, that the whole impression is already exhausted. It were, therefore, much to be wished, for the sake of the young man, that a second edition, more numerous than the former, could immediately be printed; as it appears certain that its intrinsic merit, and the exertion of the author's friends, might give it a more universal circulation than any thing of the kind which has been published within my memory.

T. BLACKLOCK.

(5) TO MR. JAMES BURNESS, WRITER, MONTROSE.

(CHAMBERS, 1840.*)

MOSSGIEL, *Tuesday, noon, Sep.* 26, 1786.

MY DEAR SIR,—I this moment receive yours—receive it with the honest, hospitable warmth of a friend's welcome. Whatever comes from you wakens always up the better blood about my heart, which your kind little recollections of my Parental Friend carries as far as it will go. 'Tis there, that man is blest! 'Tis there, my friend, man feels a consciousness of something within him above the trodden clod! The grateful reverence to the hoary earthly authors of his being—the burning glow when he clasps the woman of his soul to his bosom—the tender yearnings of heart for the little angels to whom he has given existence—these Nature has poured in milky streams about the human heart; and the man who never rouses them to action by the inspiring influences of their proper objects, loses by far the most pleasurable part of his existence.

My departure is uncertain, but I do not think it will be till after harvest. I will be on very short allowance of time indeed, if I do not comply with your friendly invitation. When it will be, I don't know; but if I can make my wish good I will endeavor to drop you a line some time before. My best compliments to Mrs. Burness; I should be equally mortified should I drop in when she is abroad, but of that I suppose there is little chance.

What I have wrote, heaven knows; I have not

* The original MS. of this letter we believe to be in the Arbroath Museum.

time to review it, so accept of it in the beaten way of friendship. With the ordinary phrase, and perhaps rather more than the ordinary sincerity—I am, dear Sir, ever yours, R. B.

TO MRS. STEWART OF STAIR,

ON THE EVE OF MY INTENDED GOING TO JAMAICA.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

[*Close of Sep., or beginning of Oct.*]

MADAM,—The hurry of my preparations for going abroad has hindered me from performing my promises so soon as I intended. I have here sent you a parcel of songs, &c., which never made their appearance, except to a friend or two at most. The song, to the tune of *Ettrick Banks*, you will easily see the impropriety of exposing much, even in manuscript.* I think, myself, it has some merit; both as a tolerable description of one of nature's sweetest scenes, a July evening; and one of the finest pieces of nature's workmanship, the finest indeed we know anything of —an amiable, beautiful young woman: but I have no common friend to procure me that permission, without which I would not dare to spread the copy.

I am quite aware, Madam, what task the world would assign me in this letter. The obscure bard, when any of the great condescend to take notice of him, should heap the altar with the incense of flattery. Their high ancestry, their own great and godlike qualities and actions, should be recounted with the most exaggerated description. This, Madam, is a task for which I am altogether unfit. Besides a certain disqualifying pride of heart, I know nothing of your

* The Song addressed to Miss Alexander, Ballochmyle.

connections in life, and have no access to where your real character is to be found—the company of your compeers: and more, I am afraid that even the most refined adulation is by no means the road to your good opinion.

One feature of your character I shall ever with grateful pleasure remember; the reception I got when I had the honor of waiting on you at Stair. I am little acquainted with politeness, but I know a good deal of benevolence of temper, and goodness of heart. Surely, did those in exalted stations know how happy they could make some classes of their inferiors by condescension and affability, they would never stand so high, measuring out with every look the height of their elevation, but condescend as sweetly as did Mrs. Stewart of Stair. R. B.

Katherine Gordon, heiress of Afton in New Cumnock, was married on 1st Feb. 1770 to Alexander (afterwards Major-General) Stewart. Stair house, with its grounds picturesquely situated on the river Ayr, some three miles below Barskimming, was purchased from the Stair family, and continued to be the residence of Mrs. and Major Stewart for upwards of twenty years, and there all their children—five in number—were born. They afterwards sold Stair House, which, after passing through several hands, was repurchased by the late Earl of Stair, who got the estate secured to his descendants by an entail. Major-General Stewart M.P., who was also Colonel of the 2nd Regiment of Foot, died at London in December 1794, aged 53, just six months after the marriage of his eldest daughter Catherine to Wm. Cunningham Esq. of Enterkin. After parting with Stair, Mrs. Stewart erected a new mansion on a portion of the Enterkin estate, bought for the purpose, and named her new residence "Afton Lodge." She died there in January 1818, having survived her daughter Mrs. Cunningham by seven or eight years. The family record from which the above particulars are derived, says "She was buried in Stair Churchyard—a daughter on each side of her."

The "parcel of Songs, &c." which accompanied the letter that forms the text, consisted of the following eight pieces,

and have been called "The Stair MSS." to distinguish them from the "Afton MSS."

1. Original draft of "The Vision," unabridged as at first composed.
2. Song—"The Lass of Ballochmyle—tune, *Ettrick Banks*."
3. Song—"The gloomy night is gathering fast."
4. Song—"My Nanie, O."
5. Song—"Handsome Nell—the author's first attempt in verse."
6. "Song in the character of a ruined farmer."
7. Song—"Tho' cruel Fate should bid us part."
8. Poem—"Misgivings of Despondency on the approach of the Gloomy Monarch of the Grave."

On the death of Mr. Dick, bookseller in Ayr, who had purchased this interesting lot from Mrs. Stewart's grandson, his representatives could not arrange to have them preserved entire. The pieces were dissevered and shared piecemeal: ultimately the separate poems reached the auction-room, and were there dispersed. Even the long poem of *The Vision* has been cut up into sub-divisions, and the dismembered sections are now owned by far-removed possessors.

(2) TO ROBERT AIKEN, ESQ., WRITER, AYR.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

[*About 8th October* 1786.]

SIR,—I was with Wilson, my printer, t'other day, and settled all our by-gone matters between us. After I had paid him all demands, I made him the offer of the second edition, on the hazard of being paid out of *the first and readiest*, which he declines. By his account, the paper of a thousand copies would cost about twenty-seven pounds, and the printing about fifteen or sixteen: he offers to agree to this for the printing, if I will advance for the paper, but this, you know, is out of my power; so farewell hopes of a second edition till I grow richer! an epoch, which, I think, will arrive at the payment of the British National Debt.

There is scarcely anything hurts me so much in being disappointed of my second edition, as not having

it in my power to shew my gratitude to Mr. Ballantine, by publishing my poem of *The Brigs of Ayr.* I would detest myself as a wretch, if I thought I were capable in a very long life of forgetting the honest, warm, and tender delicacy, with which he enters into my interests. I am sometimes pleased with myself in my grateful sensations: but, I believe, on the whole, I have very little merit in it, as my gratitude is not a virtue, the consequence of reflection; but sheerly the instinctive emotion of a heart, too inattentive to allow worldly maxims and views to settle into selfish habits.

I have been feeling all the various rotations and movements within, respecting the Excise. There are many things plead strongly against it; the uncertainty of getting soon into business; the consequences of my follies, which may perhaps make it impracticable for me to stay at home; and besides I have for some time been pining under secret wretchedness, from causes which you pretty well know—the pang of disappointment, the sting of pride, with some wandering stabs of remorse, which never fail to settle on my vitals like vultures, when attention is not called away by the calls of society, or the vagaries of the muse. Even in the hour of social mirth, my gaiety is the madness of an intoxicated criminal under the hands of the executioner. All these reasons urge me to go abroad, and to all these reasons I have only one answer—the feelings of a father. This, in the present mood I am in, overbalances everything that can be laid in the scale against it.

You may perhaps think it an extravagant fancy, but it is a sentiment which strikes home to my very soul; though sceptical in some points of our current belief, yet I think I have every evidence for the reality of a life beyond the stinted bourne of our present existence: if so, then how should I, in the presence of that tremendous Being, the Author of ex-

istence, how should I meet the reproaches of those who stand to me in the dear relation of children, whom I deserted in the smiling innocency of helpless infancy? O thou unknown Power! thou Almighty God who hast lighted up reason in my breast, and blessed me with immortality! I have frequently wandered from that order and regularity necessary for the perfection of thy works, yet thou hast never left me nor forsaken me!

. . . . .

Since I wrote the foregoing sheet, I have seen something of the storms of mischief thickening over my folly-devoted head. Should you, my friend, my benefactor, be successful in your applications for me, perhaps it may not be in my power in that way to reap the fruit of your friendly efforts. What I have written in the preceding pages is the settled tenor of my present resolution; but should inimical circumstances forbid me closing with your kind offer, or enjoying it only threaten to entail further misery.

. . . . .

To tell the truth, I have little reason for this last complaint; as the world, in general, has been kind to me fully up to my deserts. I was, for some time past, fast getting into the pining, distrustful snarl of the misanthrope. I saw myself alone, unfit for the struggle of life, shrinking at every rising cloud in the chance directed atmosphere of fortune, while, all defenceless, I looked about in vain for a cover. It never occurred to me, at least never with the force it deserved, that this world is a busy scene, and man a creature destined for a progressive struggle; and that, however I might possess a warm heart and inoffensive manners, (which last, by the bye, was rather more than I could well boast;) still, more than these passive qualities, there was something to be *done*. When all my schoolfellows and youthful compeers (those misguided few

excepted, who joined, to use a Gentoo phrase, the *hallachores* of the human race) were striking off with eager hope and earnest intent, in some one or other of the many paths of busy life, I was 'standing idle in the market place,' or only left the chase of the butterfly from flower to flower, to hunt from whim to whim.

. . . . .

You see, Sir, that if to *know* one's errors were a probability of *mending* them, I stand a fair chance: but, according to the reverend Westminster divines, though conviction must precede conversion, it is very far from always implying it.

. . . . .

(2) TO JOHN MACKENZIE, ESQ., SURGEON, MAUCHLINE,

ENCLOSING VERSES ON DINING WITH LORD DAER.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

Wednesday Morning, [*1st Nov.* 1786.]

DEAR SIR,—I never spent an afternoon among great folks with half that pleasure as when, in company with you, I had the honor of paying my devoirs to that plain, honest, worthy man, the Professor: I would be delighted to see him perform acts of kindness and friendship, though I were not the object; he does it with such a grace.

I think his character, divided into ten parts, stand thus:—four parts Socrates—four parts Nathanael—and two parts Shakespeare's Brutus.

The foregoing verses were really extempore, but a little corrected since. They may entertain you a little with the help of that partiality with which you are so good as to favor the performances of, Dear Sir, your very humble servant, R. B.

T. ROBINSON

Mrs Dunlop

T. DUNLOP

CEBBIE & CO

(1) TO MRS. DUNLOP OF DUNLOP.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

[*November* 1786.]

MADAM,—I am truly sorry I was not at home yesterday when I was so much honored with your order for my copies, and incomparably more by the handsome compliments you were pleased to pay to my poetic abilities.* I am fully persuaded there is not any class of mankind so feelingly alive to the titillations of applause as the sons of Parnassus: nor is it easy to conceive how the heart of the poor bard dances with rapture, when those, whose character in life gives them a right to be polite judges, honor him with their approbation. Had you been thoroughly acquainted with me, Madam, you could not have touched my darling heart-chord more sweetly than by noticing my attempts to celebrate your illustrious ancestor, the Saviour of his Country.

"Great patriot hero! ill-requited chief!"

The first book I met with in my early years, which I perused with pleasure, was "The life of Hannibal:" the next was "The History of Sir William Wallace:" for several of my earlier years I had few other authors; and many a solitary hour have I stole out, after the laborious vocations of the day, to shed a tear over their glorious, but unfortunate stories. In those boy-

* Gilbert has left on record that his brother "was on the point of setting out for Edinburgh before Mrs. Dunlop had heard of him. She had been afflicted with a long and severe illness when a copy of the printed poems was laid on her table by a friend, and happening to open on *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, she read it over with the greatest pleasure and surprise. Mrs. Dunlop sent off a person express to Mossgiel, a distance of fifteen or sixteen miles, with a very obliging letter to my brother, desiring him to send her half-a-dozen copies of the poems if he had them to spare, and begging he would do her the pleasure of calling at Dunlop House as soon as convenient."

ish days I remember, in particular, being struck with that part of Wallace's story where these lines occur—

> "Syne to the Leglen wood, when it was late,
> To make a silent and a safe retreat."

I chose a fine summer Sunday, the only day my line of life allowed, and walked half a dozen of miles to pay my respects to the Leglen wood,* with as much devout enthusiasm as ever pilgrim did to Loretto; and, as I explored every den and dell where I could suppose my heroic countryman to have lodged, I recollect (for even then I was a rhymer) that my heart glowed with a wish to be able to make a song on him in some measure equal to his merits. R. B.

(1) TO MR. ARCHIBALD LAWRIE, NEWMILNS.†

(BLACKIE'S "LAND OF BURNS," 1840.)

MOSSGIEL, 13*th November* 1786.

DEAR SIR,—I have, along with this, sent two volumes of Ossian, with the remaining volume of the songs. Ossian I am not in such a hurry about; but I wish the songs, with the volume of the Scotch poets, as soon as they can conveniently be despatched. If they are left at Mr. Wilson the bookseller's shop in Kilmarnock, they will easily reach me.

My most respectful compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Lawrie, and a poet's warmest wishes for their happiness to the young ladies, particularly the fair musician, whom I think much better qualified than ever David was, or could be, to charm an evil spirit out of Saul.

* Leglen Wood is situated in the heart of a peninsula, formed by a peculiar bend of the river Ayr, near Auchencruive. The distance is here measured from Mount Oliphant.

† Son of the parish minister of Loudon, to whom Dr. Blacklock wrote the letter given at page 201, *supra*.

Indeed, it needs not the feelings of a poet to be interested in the welfare of one of the sweetest scenes of domestic peace and kindred love that ever I saw; as I think the peaceful unity of St. Margaret's Hill can only be excelled by the harmonious concord of the Apocalyptic Zion. R. B.

(2) TO MONSR. ARCHIBALD LAWRIE,

COLLINE DE ST. MARGARETE.

(BLACKIE'S "LAND OF BURNS," 1840.)

MAUCHLINE, 15*th November* 1786.

DEAR SIR,—If convenient, please return me by Connel, the bearer, the two volumes of Songs I left last time I was at St. Margaret's Hill.

My best compliments to all the good family. *A Dieu je vous commende.* ROBT. BURNS.

(3) TO MR. ROBT. MUIR, KILMARNOCK.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

MY DEAR SIR,—Inclosed you have "Tam Samson," as I intend to print him. I am thinking for my Edinburgh expedition on Monday or Tuesday come se'ennight, for pos. I will see you on Tuesday first. I am ever, your much indebted,

ROBT. BURNS.

MOSSGIEL, 18*th Novr*. 1786.

TO MISS WILHELMINA ALEXANDER,

INCLOSING A SONG INSPIRED BY HER CHARMS.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

MOSSGIEL, 18*th Nov.*, 1786.

MADAM,—Poets are such outré beings, so much the children of wayward fancy and capricious whim, that I believe the world generally allows them a larger latitude in the rules of propriety, than the sober sons of judgment and prudence. I mention this as an apology for the liberties that a nameless stranger has taken with you in the enclosed poem, which he begs leave to present to you. Whether it has poetical merit any way worthy of the theme, I am not the proper judge; but it is the best my abilities can produce; and what to a good heart will, perhaps, be a superior grace, it is equally sincere as fervent.

The scenery was nearly taken from real life, though I dare say, Madam, you do not recollect it, as I believe you scarcely noticed the poetic *Reveur* as he wandered by you. I had roved out as chance directed, in the favorite haunts of my muse—the banks of the Ayr, to view nature in all the gaiety of the vernal year. The sun was flaming over the distant western hills; not a breath stirred the crimson opening blossom, or the verdant spreading leaf. It was a golden moment for a poetic heart. I listened to the feathered warblers, pouring their harmony on every hand, with a congenial kindred regard, and frequently turned out of my path, lest I should disturb their little songs or frighten them to another station. Surely, said I to myself, he must be a wretch indeed, who, regardless of your harmonious endeavor to please him, can eye your elusive flights to discover your secret recesses, and rob you of all the property nature gives you—

your dearest comforts, your helpless nestlings. Even the hoary hawthorn twig that shot across the way, what heart at such a time but must have been interested in its welfare, and wished it preserved from the rudely-browsing cattle, or the withering eastern blast? Such was the scene, and such the hour, when in a corner of my prospect, I spied one of the finest pieces of Nature's workmanship that ever crowned a poetic landscape, or blest a poet's eye—those visionary bards excepted who hold commerce with aërial beings! Had Calumny and Villainy taken my walk, they had at that moment sworn eternal peace with such an object.

What an hour of inspiration for a poet! It would have raised plain dull historic prose to metaphor and measure.

The enclosed song was the work of my return home, and perhaps but poorly answers what might have been expected from such a scene. I am going to print a second edition of my Poems, but cannot insert these verses without your permission. I have the honor to be, Madam, your most obedient and very humble servant, ROBT. BURNS.

WELL, Mr. Burns, and *did* the lady give you the desired permission? No! She was too fine a lady to notice so plain a compliment. As to her great brothers whom I have since met in life on more equal terms of respectability*—Why should I quarrel their want of attention to me? When Fate swore that their purses should be full, Nature was equally positive that their heads should be empty. Men of their fashion were surely incapable of being unpolite? "Ye canna mak a silk-purse o' a sow's lug."

R. B., 1792.

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* In particular (as the reader will afterwards see) he, as Depute Master of St. James' Lodge, Tarbolton, admitted Claude Alexander, Esq., of Ballochmyle, on 25th July 1787, an Honorary member of the Lodge, in company with Brother Professor Stewart of Catrine, and other gentlemen of distinction.

The reader will understand that the foregoing letter, which enclosed the song called "The Lass of Ballochmyle" to the lady who formed the main subject of it, is here printed, not from Currie's edition, but from the poet's own transcript of it in the Glenriddell volume of his letters, preserved in the Liverpool Athenæum Library. The author's characteristic note appended to it was for the first time published in Mr. Douglas's edition, 1877.

The veritable letter with the song which the poet transmitted to the "Lass of Ballochmyle" now hangs for the inspection of visitors in the main parlor of the farm-house of Mossgiel, near Mauchline. See Song, Vol. 1, p. 322.

(c) TO JOHN BALLANTINE, ESQ., BANKER, AYR,

ENCLOSING THE POEM CALLED, "A WINTER NIGHT."

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

SIR,—Enclosed you have my first attempt in that irregular kind of measure in which many of our finest Odes are wrote. How far I have succeeded, I don't know, but I shall be happy to have your opinion on Friday first (24th Nov.) when I intend being in Ayr.

I hear of no returns from Edinburgh to Mr. Aiken respecting my second edition business, so I am thinking to set out beginning of next week for the City myself. If my first poetic patron, Mr. Aiken, is in town, I want to get his advice, both in my procedure and some little criticism affairs much, if business will permit you to honor me with a few minutes when I come down on Friday. I have the honor to be, Sir, your much indebted humble Servt.

ROBERT BURNS.

MOSSGIEL, 20*th Nov.*, 1788.

The history of the above interesting relic of the Bard is very curious, and we are indebted to Dr. Carruthers of Inverness for its appearance here. He obtained it from his much lamented deceased friend, Colonel Francis Cunningham (youngest son of the famous Allan) who, shortly before his

death in 1875, had copied it from a lady's album in Boulogne-sur-mer, in which the precious holograph was enshrined. The poem referred to did not accompany the letter; but from the description given—"my first attempt in that irregular kind of measure"—it could be no other than the one we have ventured to indicate, and which was first published in the author's Edinburgh edition, 1787.

IN THE NAME OF THE NINE, AMEN

(CURRIE, 1800.)

WE, Robert Burns, by virtue of a warrant from Nature, bearing date the twenty-fifth of January, Anno Domini one thousand seven hundred and fifty-nine, Poet Laureat and Bard-in-Chief, in and over the districts and countries of Kyle, Cunningham, and Carrick, of old extent, To our trusty and well-beloved William Chalmers and John M'Adam, Students and Practitioners in the ancient and mysterious Science of Confounding Right and Wrong.

RIGHT TRUSTY:

Be it known unto you, that whereas, in the course of our care and watchings over the order and police of all and sundry the manufacturers, retainers, and venders of Poesy; bards, poets, poetasters, rhymers, jinglers, songsters, ballad-singers, &c., &c., &c., male and female—We have discovered a certain nefarious, abominable, and wicked song or ballad, a copy whereof we have enclosed; * Our Will therefore is, that Ye pitch upon and appoint the most execrable individual of that most execrable species, known by the appellation, phrase, and nick-name of "the Deil's Yell Nowte:" †

* Cunningham explains this as alluding to "Holy Willie's Prayer;" we, with the light of later discoveries, believe it to refer to the "Minutes of the Court of Equity." See p. 399, Vol. I.—J. H.

† Explained by Currie to be Old Bachelors; by Gilbert Burns to be Sheriff-Officers.

and after having caused him to kindle a fire at the Cross of Ayr, ye shall, at noontide of the day, put into the said wretch's merciless hands the said copy of the said nefarious and wicked song, to be consumed by fire in the presence of all beholders, in abhorrence of, and terrorem to, all such compositions and composers. And this in nowise leave ye undone, but have it executed in every point as this Our Mandate bears, before the twenty-fourth current, when in person We hope to applaud your faithfulness and zeal.

Given at Mauchline this twentieth day of November, Anno Domini one thousand seven hundred and eighty-six. GOD SAVE THE BARD!

Our Bard's head-quarters are now to be shifted from Mossgiel and Mauchline to Edinburgh; and before quitting Ayrshire at this time, we shall, for the sake of those readers who are partial to Free-masonry, record a few jottings taken from the Books of St. James' Lodge, Tarbolton, bearing upon the poet's connexion therewith, down to the close of the year 1786. The earliest existing entry in which his name appears in a Minute dated

July 27th, 1784, which he signs in his official capacity. The body of the minute refers to

> "Brother Robert Burness, Depute Master,
> Brother Wilson, Secretary, and
> Capt. James Montgomerie, G. M."

"*Tarbolton, June 29th*, 1785.—This night the Lodge met and inspected the Incidental Charges of the Lodge, and find them to amount to the sum of three pounds, nineteen shillings and three farthings Sterling, which they order their Treasurer to pay to Brother Robert Woodrow, who is to settle the same.

ROBERT BURNESS, *D. M.*

P. S.—The Lodge unanimously agree, according to their rules, to exclude John Highat, a late brother. R. B., *D.M.*

Minute,	dated	Tarbolton,	2d Aug^{t}.	1785,	signed	Robt. Burness, *D.M.*
,,	,,	Tarbolton,	18th Aug^{t}.	1785,	,,	Robt. Burness, *D.M.*
,,	,,	Tarbolton,	7th Sep^{t}.	1785,	,,	Robt. Burness, *D.M.*
,,	,,	Tarbolton,	15th Sep^{t}.	1785,	,,	Robt. Burness, *D.M.*
,,	,,	Tarbolton,	26th Oct^{r}.	1785,	,,	Robt. Burness, *D.M.*
,,	,,	Tarbolton,	10th Nov^{r}.	1785,	,,	Robt. Burness, *D.M.*

Minute, dated	Mauchline,	1st Decr.	1785,	signed	Robt. Burness,	*D.M.*
,,	,,	Tarbolton,	7th Decr.	1785,	,,	Robt. Burness,	*D.M.*
,,	,,	Tarbolton,	7th Janr.	1786,	,,	Robt. Burness,	*D.M.*
,,	,,	* Tarbolton,	1st March	1786,	,,	Robt. Burness,	*D.M.*
,,	,,	Mauchline,	25th May	1786,	,,	Robt. Burns,	*D.M.*
,,	,,	Mauchline,	7th June	1786,	,,	Robt. Burns,	*D.M.*
,,	,,	Mauchline,	15th June	1786,	,,	Robt. Burns,	*D.M.*
,,	,,	Mauchline,	23rd June	1786,	,,	Robt. Burns,	*D.M.*
,,	,,	Mauchline,	29th June	1786,	,,	Robt. Burns,	*D.M.*
,,	,,	Tarbolton,	4th Augt.	1786,	,,	Gilbert Burns,	*J.W.*
,,	,,	Tarbolton,	18th Augt.	1786,	,,	Robert Burns,	*D.M.*
,,	,,	Sorn	5th Octr.	1786,	,,	Robt. Burns,	*D.M.*
,,	,,	Mauchline,	10th Novr.	1786,	,,	Robt. Burns,	*D.M.*
,,	,,	Mauchline,	14th Decr.	1786,	,,	Gilbert Burns,	*J.W.*

JOURNEY TO EDINBURGH.

For nearly half a century after the death of Burns, it was a common belief that on his first journey to Edinburgh he tramped all the way—a distance of nearly sixty miles. Dr. Currie's mis-statement to that effect in his first edition was never corrected, except by omitting, in his next issue, the concluding part of the sentence in which the mis-statement was made—"having performed his journey on foot." Chambers, in 1838, improved on Currie's mistake by adding that the poor bard was so foot-sore and knocked up with his journey that he could not leave his room for two days after reaching the city. Allan Cunningham told his readers that the poet "took a secret leave of his mother, and away he walked through Glenap to Edinburgh. . . . He turned his face to Arthur's Seat, and sung, with much buoyancy of heart as he went, a soothing snatch of an old ballad—

> 'As I cam in by Glenap, I met wi' an aged woman;
> She bade me cheer up my heart, for the best o' my days was comin.'"

Honest Allan, who never took the pains to visit Ayrshire before venturing to tell the world all about Burns, did not know that Glenap lies nearly as far from Mossgiel in a south-westerly direction as Edinburgh does in a north-easterly one. At same time, it is but justice to him to allow that he had Lockhart's authority for putting that ballad-snatch into the poet's lips.

The details about the bard's progress and entry to Edin-

* On this occasion, Gilbert Burness is "passed and raised," and be it observed that this is the last instance in these Books where the important surname is signed "Burness."

burgh assumed an authentic and really interesting shape only when a reliable informant, Mr. Archibald Prentice, editor of the *Manchester Times*, on 8th March 1841, forwarded a letter on the subject to Professor Wilson of Edinburgh, who gave the communication immediate publicity. The substance of that information is as follows :—In 1786, the father of Mr. Prentice was a young farmer at Covington Mains, near Biggar, and a confirmed admirer of Burns's poetry, as is vouched by the poet's Edinburgh list of subscribers in 1787, where his name is set down for twenty copies. A mutual friend of Mr. Prentice and of Burns was Mr. George Reid, of Barquharie, near Ochiltree, who volunteered the aid of an excellent pony to convey the bard to Edinburgh on this occasion. It was arranged that the journey should be performed in two rides, and that Covington, which is just about half-way, should be the resting place, during the first night. In consequence of notice sent by Mr. Reid to Mr. Prentice of the poet's intentions, the latter prepared an entertainment at his house, to which the neighboring farmers were invited. Accordingly, on the afternoon of Monday 27th November 1787, Burns was seen approaching under the guidance of Mr. Lang, a young clergyman, then located in that quarter, who had been sent out on horseback to meet the poet at some distance off, and herald his way to Covington. Our bard had proceeded from Mossgiel by way of Sorn and Muirkirk, tracing his favorite Ayr to its source at Glenbuck. A step or two brought him into Lanarkshire, where he soon was among the windings of the infant Clyde. The services of Mr. Lang would be available there at occasional crossings of that stream; for the fords were uncertain through the effect of frequent floods in that hilly district. The parish of Covington is a beautiful amphitheatre, with Wellbrae Hill to the east, Tinto and the Culter Fells to the south, and the pretty green conical hill, Quothquan Law, to the east; the whole scene being enlivened by the youthful Clyde which winds its way through the centre, gathering volume from a hundred tributary rills. The bard has not left this picture unpainted—

> "Yon wild mossy mountains sae lofty and wide,
> That nurse in their bosom the youth o' the Clyde,
> Where the grouse thro' the heath lead their coveys to feed,
> And the swain tents his flock as he pipes on his reed."

The fact of the poet's arrival was intimated to the invited neighbors by a white sheet, attached to a hay-fork, being put on the top of the farmer's highest cornstack, and pre-

sently they were seen issuing from their homes and converging to the point of meeting. A glorious evening, or rather night which borrowed something from the morning followed, and the conversation of the poet confirmed and increased the admiration created by his writings. On the following morning he breakfasted with a large party at the next farm-house, tenanted by James Stodart; and at Carnwath he lunched with Mr. John Stodart, banker there, whose daughter afterwards became Mrs. Prentice.

The poet reached Edinburgh on the evening of Tuesday 28th November, and took an early opportunity of returning the pony to Mr. Reid by the hands of Mr. John Samson (a brother of the renowned "Tam") who happened then to be leaving Edinburgh for Ayrshire. Mr. Samson was also bearer of the following note from Burns.

(1) TO MR. GEORGE REID, BARQUHARIE.

(CHAMBERS, 1851.)

MY DEAR SIR,—John Samson begged your pownie in such a manner, seconded by Mr. Dalrymple of Orangefield, that I hope you will forgive my not returning it by the carrier.

I left Mr. Prentice's on Monday night. There was a most agreeable little party in the evening; a Mr. Lang, a dainty body of a clergyman; Mr. and Mrs. Stodart—a glorious fellow, with a still more glorious wife, with whom I breakfasted, along with Mr. Prentice, next morning. For Mr. Prentice, no words can do him justice. Sound sterling sense, and plain warm hospitality are truly his. R. B.

[EDINBURGH, 29*th Nov.* 1786.]

Mr. Prentice junior, concluded his interesting communication in these words:—"My father though a strictly moral and religious man himself, always maintained that the virtues of the poet greatly predominated over his faults. I once heard him exclaim with hot wrath, when somebody was quoting from an *apologist*, 'What! do *they* apologise for

him! One-half of his good, and all his bad divided among a score o' them, would make them a' better men!' In the year 1809, I resided for a short time in Ayrshire, in the hospitable house of my father's friend Reid, and surveyed with a strong interest such visitors as had known Burns. I soon learned how to anticipate their representations of his character. The men of strong minds and strong feelings were invariable in their expressions of admiration; but the prosy consequential *bodies* all disliked him as exceedingly dictatorial. The men whose religion was based on intellect and high moral sentiment all thought well of him; but the mere professors, with their 'twa-mile prayers and half-mile graces,' denounced him as 'worse than an infidel.'"

BURNS IN EDINBURGH.

From allusions in the poet's note to Reid of Barquharie, it is evident that he had, in Ayrshire, been introduced to Mr. Dalrymple of Orangefield. Chambers suggests that as the latter gentleman, whom he describes as "a warm-hearted, high-pulsed man, enthusiastically given to Masonry, and an occasional scribbler of verses," had been concerned in the laying of the foundation-stone of the *New Brig* of Ayr, that introduction probably came through Provost Ballantine. The reader will find in our note at page 74, *supra*, some particulars regarding the family history of Mr. Dalrymple, and his relationship to the Earl of Glencairn, the Earl of Buchan, &c. Through that opening, Burns secured an almost immediate intercourse with a distinguished coterie of notables in Edinburgh, and his prior acquaintanceship with Professor Dugald Stewart brought him into the circles of science and literature. With exception of the note to Mr. George Reid, above printed, the poet's earliest known letter written in Edinburgh is that addressed to

(1) JAMES DALRYMPLE, ESQ. OF ORANGEFIELD.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

[EDINBURGH, 30*th Nov.* 1786.]

DEAR SIR,—I suppose the devil is so elated with his success with you, that he is determined by a *coup*

de main to complete his purposes on you all at once, in making you a poet. I broke open the letter you sent me: hummed over the rhymes; and, as I saw they were extempore, said to myself, they were very well; but when I saw at the bottom a name I shall ever value with grateful respect, "I gapit wide, but naething spak." I was nearly as much struck as the friends of Job, of affliction-bearing memory, when they sat down with him seven days and seven nights, and spoke not a word.

I am naturally of a superstitious cast, and as soon as my wonder-scared imagination regained its consciousness, and resumed its functions, I cast about what this mania of yours might portend. My foreboding ideas had the wide stretch of possibility; and several events, great in their magnitude, and important in their consequences, occurred to my fancy. The downfall of the conclave, or the crushing of the Cork rumps: a ducal coronet to Lord George Gordon and the Protestant interest; or St. Peter's keys to * * * *

You want to know how I come on. I am just *in statu quo*, or, not to insult a gentleman with my Latin, in "auld use and wont." The noble Earl of Glencairn took me by the hand to-day, and interested himself in my concerns, with a goodness like that benevolent Being whose image he so richly bears. He is a stronger proof of the immortality of the soul, than any that philosophy ever produced. A mind like his can never die. Let the worshipful squire, H. L., the reverend Mass J. M., go into their primitive nothing. At best, they are but ill-digested lumps of chaos—only, one of them strongly tinged with bituminous particles and sulphureous effluvia. But my noble patron, eternal as the heroic swell of magnanimity, and the generous throb of benevolence, shall look on with princely eye at "the war of elements, the wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds." R. B.

(2) TO SIR JOHN WHITEFOORD, BART.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

EDIN. *1st Dec.* [1786.]

SIR,—Mr. M'Kenzie, in Mauchline, my very warm and worthy friend, has informed me how much you are pleased to interest yourself in my fate as a man, and, (what to me is incomparably dearer) my fame as a poet. I have, Sir, in one or two instances, been patronized by those of your character in life, when I was introduced to their notice by social friends to them, and honored acquaintances to me; but you are the first gentleman in the country whose benevolence and goodness of heart has interested him for me, unsolicited and unknown. I am not master enough of the etiquette of these matters to know, nor did I stay to enquire, whether formal duty bade, or cold propriety disallowed, my thanking you in this manner,* as I am convinced, from the light in which you kindly view me, that you will do me the justice to believe this letter is not the manœuvre of the needy, sharping author, fastening on those in upper life, who honor him with a little notice of him or his works. Indeed the situation of poets is generally such, to a proverb, as may, in some measure, palliate that prostitution of heart and talents they have at times been guilty of. I do not think prodigality is, by any means, a necessary concomitant of a poetic turn, but I believe a careless, indolent inattention to economy is almost inseparable from it; then there must be in the heart of every bard of Nature's making a certain modest sensibility, mixed with a kind of pride, which will ever keep him out of the way of those windfalls of fortune,

* Compare this expression with a similar one in the letter to the Earl of Eglinton, 11th January 1787.

which frequently light on hardy impudence, and foot-licking servility. It is not easy to imagine a more helpless state than his whose poetic fancy unfits him for the world, and whose character as a scholar gives him some pretensions to the *politesse* of life—yet is as poor as I am.

For my part, I thank Heaven my star has been kinder; learning never elevated my ideas above the peasant's shed, and I have an independent fortune at the plough-tail.

I was surprised to hear that any one who pretended in the least to the manners of the gentleman should be so foolish, or worse, as to stoop to traduce the morals of such a one as I am, and so inhumanly cruel, too, as to meddle with that late most unfortunate, unhappy part of my story. With a tear of gratitude, I thank you, Sir, for the warmth with which you interposed in behalf of my conduct. I am, I acknowledge, too frequently the sport of whim, caprice, and passion; but reverence to God, and integrity to my fellow-creatures, I hope I shall ever preserve. I have no return, Sir, to make you for your goodness but one —a return which, I am persuaded, will not be unacceptable—the honest warm wishes of a grateful heart for your happiness, and every one of that lovely flock, who stand to you in a filial relation. If ever Calumny aim the poisoned shaft at them, may Friendship be by to ward the blow! R. B.

The foregoing letter appeared in Currie's first edition under date "Dec. 1788:" in later editions it was shifted back to "Dec. 1787," and here we have no hesitation in removing it even a year farther back. Its contents shew that some over-righteous, or perhaps malicious person, having some pretensions to the position if not the manners of a gentleman, had gone out of his road to attack the poet's moral character, especially by raking up against him the unhappy story of his transactions with Jean Armour.

Dr. Mackenzie, who was the friend, and medical attendant

of the family of Sir John Whitefoord, had communicated this circumstance to Burns in a letter, followed by the information that Sir John had silenced the slanderer by a generous defence of the poet. Dr. Mackenzie afterwards practiced his profession for many years in Irvine, and having attained the highest honors of the magistracy in that burgh, retired in 1827 to Edinburgh, where he died at an advanced age in January 1837. To his son, John Whitefoord Mackenzie, Esq., W.S., we are indebted for some valuable information made use of in these volumes.

The following is Sir John's reply to Burns's letter above given. It was printed in Dr. Currie's first edition, under its proper date, but withdrawn from all subsequent issues of that work. The reader will perceive that its opening paragraphs directly refer to the bard's expressions about his "fate as a man, and fame as a poet;" and yet, so careless was Currie, and his successors in same department, in regard to judging of dates by internal evidence supplied from the text they professed to edit, that in this instance the *reply* was placed so as to precede by two years, the poet's letter to which it is an obvious *answer!*

This letter of Sir John is farther interesting as proving that one of the motives which attracted Burns to the city, was the furtherance of his favorite Excise scheme.

SIR JOHN WHITEFOORD TO ROBERT BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *4th December* 1786.

SIR,—I received your letter a few days ago. I do not pretend to much interest, but what I have I shall be ready to exert in procuring the attainment of any object you have in view. Your character as a man, (forgive my reversing your order) as well as a poet, entitle you, I think, to the assistance of every inhabitant of Ayrshire. I have been told you wished to be made a guager; I submit it to your consideration, whether it would not be more desirable, if a sum could be raised by subscription for a second edition of your poems, to lay it out in the stocking of a small farm. I am persuaded it would be a line of life much more agreeable to your feelings, and in the end more satisfactory. When you have considered this, let me know, and whatever you determine upon, I will endeavor to promote as far as my abilities will permit. With compliments to my friend the doctor, I am, your friend and well wisher,

JOHN WHITEFOORD.

P.S.—I shall take it as a favor, when you at any time send me a new production.

It may be explained in reference to the next letter of the poet, that "the lands of Mauchline Mains, East, West, and South Mossgiel, Haugh-Mill," and some others in Ayrshire, which the Loudon family was at that period forced to part with, were advertised to be sold in the Exchange Coffee-house, Edinburgh, on 5th December 1786. Burns seems to have been commissioned by Mr. Gavin Hamilton to send him early intelligence of the result of the sale. The Earl of Loudon (for whom Hamilton acted as factor in Mauchline parish), had died in the most melancholy manner, the victim of pressing embarrassments, in the preceding April.

(1) TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ., MAUCHLINE.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

EDINBURGH, *Dec. 7th*, 1786.

HONORED SIR.—I have paid every attention to your commands, but can only say, what perhaps you will have heard before this reach you, that Muirkirklands were bought by a John Gordon, W.S., but for whom I know not; Mauchlands, Haugh-Miln, &c., by a Frederick Fotheringham, supposed to be for Ballochmyle Laird, and Adamhill and Shaw-wood were bought for Oswald's folks.—This is so imperfect an account, and will be so late ere it reach you, that were it not to discharge my conscience I would not trouble you with it; but after all my diligence I could make it no sooner nor better.

For my own affairs, I am in a fair way of becoming as eminent as Thomas à Kempis or John Bunyan; and you may expect henceforth to see my birth-day inserted among the wonderful events, in the Poor Robin's and Aberdeen Almanacks, along with the black Monday, and the battle of Bothwell Bridge.—

My Lord Glencairn and the Dean of Faculty, Mr. H. Erskine, have taken me under their wing; and by all probability I shall soon be the tenth worthy, and the eighth wise man of the world. Through my Lord's influence it is inserted in the records of the Caledonian Hunt, that they universally, one and all, subscribe for the second edition.*—My subscription bills come out to-morrow, and you shall have some of them next post.—I have met, in Mr. Dalrymple, of Orangefield, what Solomon emphatically calls "A friend that sticketh closer than a brother."—The warmth with which he interests himself in my affairs is of the same enthusiastic kind which you, Mr. Aiken, and the few patrons that took notice of my earlier poetic days, showed for the poor unlucky devil of a poet.

I always remember Mrs. Hamilton and Miss Kennedy in my poetic prayers, but *you* both in prose and verse.

May cauld ne'er catch you but a hap,†
Nor hunger but in Plenty's lap!

Amen. R. B.

In a periodical called *The Lounger*, published in Edinburgh by Mr. Creech, appeared on 9th December 1786, a generous article from the pen of Henry Mackenzie, in which the poetry of Burns, as exhibited in the recent Kilmarnock edition, was reviewed in so appreciative a spirit, and so judiciously illustrated by select examples, that the fame of the poet was soon wafted over the kingdom. The closing passage of that review is worth quoting here:—"Burns possesses the spirit as well as the fancy of a poet. The honest pride and independence of soul, which are sometimes the Muse's only dower, break forth on every occasion in his works. It may be that I shall wrong his feelings while I indulge my own, in calling the attention of the public to his situation and circumstances. That condition, humble as it was, in which

* It will be shown by and by that the poet was mistaken here; he merely anticipated what ultimately took place.

† "But" in the first of these lines signifies *without;* in the second line it is the common English conjunction.

he found content, and wooed the Muse, might not have been deemed uncomfortable; but grief and misfortune have reached him there; and one or two of his poems hint, what I have learned from some of his countrymen, that he has been obliged to form the resolution of leaving his native land, to seek, under a West Indian clime, that shelter and support which Scotland has denied him. But I trust that means may be found to prevent this resolution from taking effect, and that I do my country no more than justice when I suppose her ready to stretch out her hand to cherish and retain this native poet whose 'woodnotes wild' possess so much excellence. To repair the wrongs of suffering or neglected merit, to call forth genius from the obscurity in which it had pined indignant, and place it where it may profit or delight the world—these are exertions which give to wealth an enviable superiority, to greatness and to patronage a laudable pride."*

(3) TO JOHN BALLANTINE, ESQ., BANKER, AYR.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

EDINBURGH, 13*th Dec.*, 1786.

MY HONORED FRIEND,—I would not write you till I could have it in my power to give you some account of myself and my matters, which, by the bye, is often no easy task. I arrived here on Tuesday was se'n-night,† and have suffered ever since I came to town with a miserable head-ache and stomach complaint, but am now a good deal better. I have found a worthy warm friend in Mr. Dalrymple, of Orangefield, who introduced me to Lord Glencairn, a man whose worth and brotherly kindness to me I shall remember, when time will be no more. By his interest it is passed in the "Caledonian Hunt," and entered in their books,

* It is worthy of note in this connexion, that on 13th December, a complimentary Epistle to Burns appeared in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, in which he was acknowledged as—"The prince o' Poets and o' Ploughmen."

† Mistake, for "Tuesday was *fourteen* days." The 13th was Wednesday.

that they are to take each a copy of the second edition, for which they are to pay one guinea.* I have been introduced to a good many of the *Noblesse*, but my avowed patrons and patronesses are the Duchess of Gordon—the Countess of Glencairn, with my Lord, and Lady Betty†—the Dean of Faculty—Sir John Whitefoord. I have likewise warm friends among the literati; Professors Stewart, Blair, and Mr. Mackenzie—the Man of Feeling. An unknown hand left ten guineas for the Ayrshire bard in Mr. Sibbald's hands, which I got. I since have discovered my generous unknown friend to be Patrick Miller, Esq., brother to the Justice Clerk; and drank a glass of claret with him, by invitation, at his own house yesternight. I am nearly agreed with Creech to print my book, and I suppose I will begin on Monday. I will send a subscription bill or two, next post; when I intend writing my first kind patron, Mr. Aiken. I saw his son today, and he is very well.

Dugald Stewart, and some of my learned friends, put me in the periodical paper called The Lounger, a copy of which I here enclose you. I was, Sir, when I was first honored with your notice, too obscure; now I tremble lest I should be ruined by being dragged too suddenly into the glare of polite and learned observation.

I shall certainly, my ever honored patron, write you an account of my every step; and better health and more spirits may enable me to make it something better than this stupid matter-of-fact epistle.—I have the honor to be, good Sir, your ever most grateful humble servant, ROBERT BURNS.

If any of my friends write me, my direction is, care of Mr. Creech, Bookseller.

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* This was only a fallacious *on dit*, as we shall afterwards find.

† Lady Betty Cunningham, an unmarried sister of Lord Glencairn.

(4) To MR. ROBERT MUIR, KILMARNOCK.

(Dr. Waddell's Ed., 1869.)

Edinburgh, 15*th Dec.*, 1786.

My Dear Sir,—I delayed writing you till I was able to give you some rational account of myself, and my affairs. I am got under the patronage of the Duchess of Gordon, Countess Dowager of Glencairn, Sir John Whitefoord, the Dean of Faculty, Professors Blair, Stewart, Greenfield, and several others of the noblesse and literati. I believe I shall begin at Mr. Creech's as my publisher. I am still undetermined as to the future; and, as usual, never think of it. I have now neither house nor home that I can call my own, and live on the world at large. I am just a poor wayfaring Pilgrim on the road to Parnassus, a thoughtless wanderer and sojourner in a strange land. I received a very kind letter from Mr. A. Dalziel, for which please return my thanks; and tell him I will write him in a day or two. Mr. Parker, Charles, Dr. Corsan, and honest John, my *quondam* printer, I remember in my prayers when I pray in rhyme. To all of whom, till I have an opportunity [of saluting them in person, present my warmest remembrances.]*

(3) TO MR. ROBERT AIKEN, AYR.

(Dr. Waddell's Edition, 1869.)

Dear Patron of my Virgin Muse,—I wrote Mr. Ballantine at large all my operations and "eventful

* The original MS. of the above letter, which is now possessed by Mr. John Reid, Kingston Place, Glasgow, is in a very fragmentary condition, and wants the closing portion, with the poet's signature.

story," since I came to town,—I have found in Mr. Creech, who is my agent forsooth, and Mr. Smellie who is to be my printer,* that honor and goodness of heart which I always expect in Mr. Aiken's friends. Mr. Dalrymple of Orangefield I shall ever remember: my Lord Glencairn I shall ever pray for. The Maker of man has great honor in the workmanship of his Lordship's heart. May he find that patronage and protection in his guardian angel that I have found in him! His Lordship has sent a parcel of subscription bills to the Marquis of Graham, with downright orders to get them filled up with all the first Scottish names about Court.—He has likewise wrote to the Duke of Montague and is about to write to the Duke of Portland for their Graces' interest in behalf of the Scotch Bard's subscription.

You will very probably think, my honored friend, that a hint about the mischievous nature of intoxicated vanity may not be unseasonable; but, alas! you are wide of the mark. Various concurring circumstances have raised my fame as a Poet to a height which I am absolutely certain I have not merits to support; and I look down on the future as I would into the bottomless pit.

You shall have one or two more bills when I have an opportunity of a Carrier. I am ever, with the sincerest gratitude, Honored Sir, Your most devoted humble servt.,

ROBERT BURNS.

EDINR., 16*th Dec.*, 1786.

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* On 14th December, Mr. Creech advertised the Poetical Works of Robert Burns as "in the press, to be published by subscription for the sole benefit of the Author."

(5) TO MR. ROBERT MUIR, KILMARNOCK,

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

EDINBURGH, *Dec. 20th*, 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have just time for the carrier, to tell you that I received your letter; of which I shall say no more but what a lass of my acquaintance said of her bastard wean; she said she "did na ken wha was the father exactly, but she suspected it was some o' thae bonie blackguard smugglers, for it was like them." So I only say your obliging epistle was like you. I enclose you a parcel of subscription bills. Your affair of sixty copies is also like you: but it would not be like me to comply.*

Your friend's notion of my life has put a crotchet in my head of sketching it in some future epistle to you.† My compliments to Charles and Mr. Parker.

R. B.

The "poet's address to a Haggis" was printed in the Edinburgh *Caledonian Mercury*, the day on which the foregoing letter was written. Of same date Burns appears to have had communication, either personally or by letter, with a venerable friend of his father, whose name has already been introduced to the reader's notice as one of the witnesses at the poet's baptism. We refer to Mr. John Tennant, at that time a farmer on the Doonside property, a little way south of the old "Brig o' Doon," but now (1786) residing at Glenconner in Ochiltree parish. We shall hear of him again in the summer of 1787, as Burns's adviser in the choice of one of the farms offered to him by Patrick Miller, Esq., of Dalswinton. On the present occasion the poet presented Mr. Tennant with a Book, which is now in the possession of Charles Tennant,

* The name of this generous correspondent appears in the list of Subscribers to Creech's first edition for 40 copies. It will be remembered that he subscribed for 72 copies of the Kilmarnock volume.

† This gives us the first hint of the author's idea of an Autobiography.

Esq., of The Glen, Peeblesshire, great-grandson of the donee. It bears the following inscription in the poet's well-defined holograph :—

"A paltry present from Robert Burns, the Scotch Bard, to his own friend and his father's friend, John Tennant, in Glenconner.—*20th December*, 1786."

The book thus presented is entitled "Letters concerning the Religion essential to man, as it is distinct from what is merely an accession to it. In two parts ; translated from the French. Glasgow, printed for Robert Urie, 1761." It is referred to by David Sillar as a favorite book with Burns when he first came to Tarbolton parish.

The following letter, addressed to Burns by his much revered friend, the parish minister of Loudon, was considered by Dr. Currie of sufficient importance to appear in the Bard's correspondence. It seems to justify the belief we have already expressed that Dr. Blacklock's letter to Dr. Lawrie had a smaller share in the formation of the poet's resolution to remove to Edinburgh than he credits it with in his Autobiography. After Burns had been some weeks in the city without calling upon Dr. Blacklock, the latter thus wrote to the Ayrshire clergyman who had directed his notice to the ploughman's poems :—"By the by, I hear that Mr. Burns is, and has been some time, in Edinburgh, which news I am sorry to have heard at second hand : they would have come much more welcome from the bard's own mouth. I have, however, written to Mr. Mackenzie, *the Man of Feeling*, to beg the favor that he would bring us together."

THE REV. GEORGE LAWRIE TO ROBERT BURNS.

"NEWMILNS, *22nd Dec.*, 1786.

DEAR SIR,—I last week received a letter from Dr. Blacklock, in which he expresses a desire of seeing you. . . . I rejoice to hear, from all corners, of your rising fame, and I wish and expect it may tower still higher by the new publication. But, as a friend, I warn you to prepare to meet with your share of detraction and envy—a train that may always accompany great men. For your comfort I am in great hopes that the number of your friends and admirers will increase, and that you have some chance of Ministerial, or even Royal patronage. Now, my friend, such rapid success is very un-

common: and do you think yourself in no danger of suffering by applause, and a full purse? Remember Solomon's advice, which he spoke from experience:—'Stronger is he that conquers his own spirit,' &c.

I hope you will not imagine I speak from suspicion or evil report. I assure you that I speak from love and good report, and good opinion, and a strong desire to see you shine in the sunshine as you have done in the shade—in the practice as you do in the theory of virtue. This is my prayer in return for your elegant composition in verse. All here join in compliments and good wishes for your further prosperity."

(2) TO MR. WILLIAM CHALMERS, WRITER, AYR.

(CURRIE 1800, AND CROMEK 1808.)

EDINBURGH, *Dec.* 27, 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I confess I have sinned the sin for which there is hardly any forgiveness—ingratitude to friendship—in not writing you sooner; but of all men living, I had intended to have sent you an entertaining letter; and by all the plodding, stupid powers, that in nodding, conceited majesty, preside over the dull routine of business—a heavily solemn oath this!—I am, and have been, ever since I came to Edinburgh, as unfit to write a letter of humor, as to write a commentary on the Revelation of St. John the Divine, who was banished to the Isle of Patmos, by the cruel and bloody Domitian, son to Vespasian, and brother to Titus, both emperors of Rome, and who was himself an emperor, and raised the second or third persecution, I forget which, against the Christians, and after throwing the said Apostle John, brother to the Apostle James, commonly called James the Greater, to distinguish him from another James, who was, on some account or another, known by the name of James the less—after throwing him into a cauldron of boiling oil, from which he was miraculously preserved, he

banished the poor son of Zebedee to a desert island in the Archipelago, where he was gifted with the second sight, and saw as many wild beasts as I have seen since I came to Edinburgh; which, a circumstance not very uncommon in story-telling, brings me back to where I set out.

To make you some amends for what, before you reach this paragraph, you will have suffered, I enclose you two poems I have carded and spun since I past Glenbuck.* One blank in the Address to Edinburgh —"Fair B——," is heavenly Miss Burnet, daughter to Lord Monboddo, at whose house I had the honor to be more than once. There has not been anything nearly like her in all the combinations of Beauty, Grace, and Goodness, the great Creator has formed since Milton's Eve on the first day of her existence.†

I have sent you a parcel of subscription-bills, and have written to Mr. Ballantine and Mr. Aiken to call on you for some of them, if they want them. My direction is, care of Andrew Bruce, Merchant, Bridge Street.

After a brief residence in the city, the poet's plain rustic garb gave way to a suit of blue and buff, the livery of Mr. Fox, with buckskins and top-boots. He continued to wear his hair tied behind, and spread upon his forehead, but without the powder which was then nearly universal. Lockhart, in 1828 (alas! just half a century ago!) thus wrote with becoming satisfaction of the full-length picture of the Bard by Nasmyth, an engraving of which we present the reader in this

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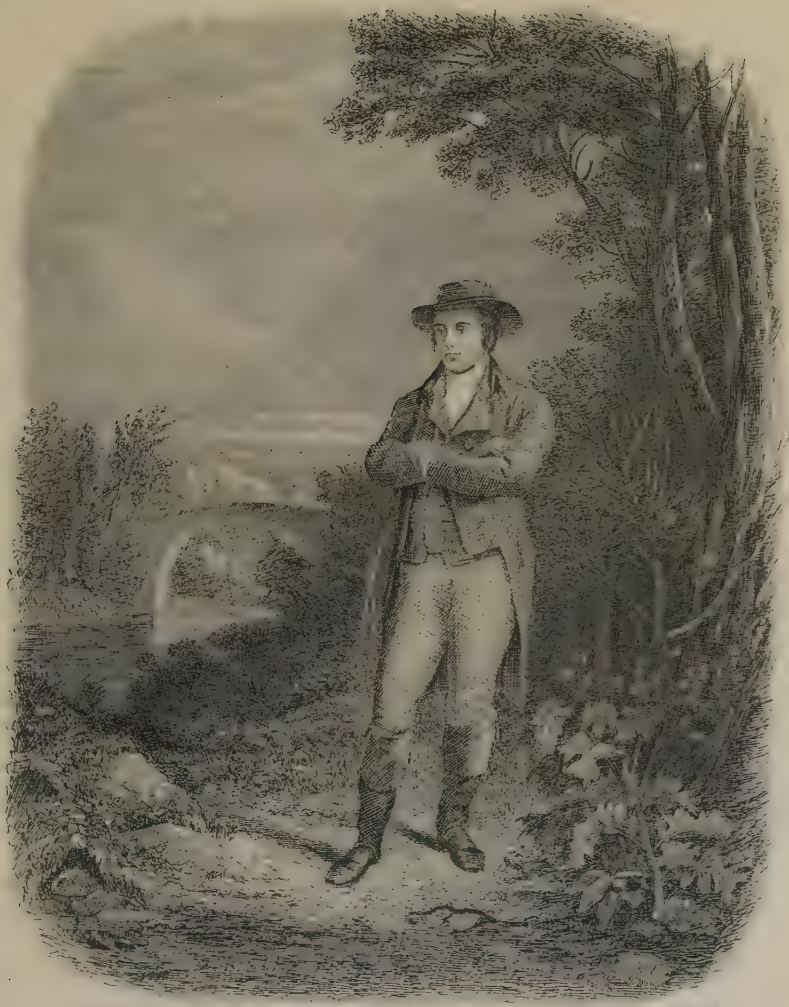
* Glenbuck (as we have before pointed out), is the last bit of Ayrshire soil Burns passed over before entering Lanarkshire on his way to Edinburgh. The second of the two fresh poems would likely be his "Address to a Haggis."

† We can never forgive Alexander Smith for having committed himself to utter and vend the following inconsiderate sentence:—"Burns has hardly left a trace of himself in the northern capital. During his residence there, his spirit was soured, and he was taught to drink whisky-punch—obligations which he repaid by addressing 'Edina, Scotia's darling Seat,' in a copy of his tamest verses." Lockhart, who could feel poetry as well as the author of "City Poems," says the Address to Edinburgh is specially "remarkable for the grand stanzas on the Castle and Holyrood with which it concludes."



A. NAYSMITH, PINX.

Robert Burns.

volume; "Mr. Nasmyth has prepared for the present Memoirs, a sketch of the poet at full length, as he appeared in Edinburgh in the first hey-day of his reputation; dressed in tight jockey boots, and very tight buckskin breeches, according to the fashion of the day, and (Jacobite as he was) in what was considered as the Fox livery, viz., a blue coat and buff waistcoat, with broad blue stripes. The surviving friends of Burns, who have seen this picture, are unanimous in pronouncing it to furnish a very lively representation of the bard as he first attracted public notice on the streets of Edinburgh. The scenery of the back-ground is very nearly that of Burns's native spot—the river and bridge of Doon, near Alloway Kirk."

Mrs. Alison Cockburn, authoress of the charming song, "I've seen the smiling of Fortune beguiling," who was, in 1786, a lively old lady residing in Crichton Street, Edinburgh, thus wrote to a friend, near the close of that year:—"The town is at present agog with the Ploughman Poet, who receives adulation with native dignity, and is the very figure of his profession—strong, but coarse; yet has a most enthusiastic heart of love. He has seen Duchess Gordon, and all the gay world. His favorite, for looks and manners, is Bess Burnet—no bad judge indeed!"

"Duchess Gordon and all the gay world!" * Another extract from a private letter will throw light on that expression. In Feb. 1786, Mr. Drummond, a member of the Scottish bar, thus wrote to a friend of his in India, (the letter is in the possession of Mr. Blair, Balthayock House, Perthshire):—"The good town is uncommonly crowded and splendid at present. The example of dissipation set by her Grace the Duchess of Gordon, is far from shewing vice her own image. It is really astonishing to think what effect a single person will have on public manners, when supported by high rank and great address. She is never absent from a public place, and the later the hour so much the better. It is often four o'clock in the morning before she goes to bed, and she never requires more

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* Jane, Duchess of Gordon, was of Ayrshire growth, she being a daughter of Magdalene Blair, of Blair, in that county. A great day was that in Ayton, Berwickshire, on 25th October 1767, when Alexander, 4th Duke of Gordon, aged 24, was there married to the charming Jane, second daughter of Sir Wm. Maxwell of Monreith, in Wigtonshire, Bart. Now, after twenty years of wedlock, with neither beauty nor gaiety impaired, she was mother of the Marquis of Huntly and six other children, of whom more anon when Burns visits Gordon Castle, on his Highland tour.

than five hours' sleep. Dancing, cards, and company, occupy her whole time."

(1) TO LORD MONBODDO, ST. JOHN STREET.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)*

I SHALL do myself the honor, sir, to dine with you to-morrow, as you obligingly request.

My conscience twitting me with having neglected to send Miss Eliza a song which she once mentioned to me as a song she wished to have—I inclose it for her, with one or two more, by way of a peace-offering. —I have the honor to be, my Lord, your very humble serv^t.,

ROB^T. BURNS.

SATURDAY EVE [*30th Dec*].

(1) TO MR. JAMES SIBBALD, BOOKSELLER.

(DR. WADDELL'S ED., 1867.)

LAWNMARKET, [*Jan.* 1787.]

SIR—So little am I acquainted with the modes and manners of the more public and polished walks of life, that I often feel myself much embarrassed how to express the feelings of my heart, particularly gratitude.

> "——————— Rude am I in speech,
> And little blest in the set, polish'd phrase;
> For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,
> Till now—some nine moons wasted—they have used
> Their dearest efforts in the rural field;
> And therefore, little can I grace my cause
> In speaking for myself."

The warmth with which you have befriended an

* From the original MS. in the collection of W. F. Watson, Esq., Edinburgh.

obscure man, and young Author in your three last Magazines—I can only say, Sir, I feel the weight of the obligation, and wish I could express my sense of it. In the meantime accept of this conscious acknowledgement from, Sir, Your obliged Servant,

ROBERT BURNS.

The foregoing admirable letter first appeared in Nicholl's illustrations of the Literary History of the 18th century, Vol. III. 8vo. 1818. Mr. Sibbald himself was distinguished in more than one walk of literary enterprise; his "Chronicle of Scottish Poetry" is a much prized work, and on account of its scarcity fetches now a considerable price.* He was in 1786 publisher of a monthly periodical, called the *Edinburgh Magazine*, and the three numbers above referred to by Burns, were those of October, November, and December, published respectively in the beginning of the month following. Thus, we may be certain that the letter in the text would be penned about 3d January 1787. Each of those numbers gave extracts from the Kilmarnock volume, with kindly and judicious observations by the editor. A copy of the October part could not fail to reach Burns in November, while he was yet in Ayrshire.

On January 4th 1787, Professor Dugald Stewart presented Burns with a copy of Dr. Aiken's "Essay on Song-Writing, with a collection of English Songs," 2nd Edit. 1774. The identical volume so presented was exhibited in Dumfries on the poet's Centenary Day, 1859.

In the Professor's narrative supplied by him to Dr. Currie, we find the following reference to this matter:—"The collection of songs by Dr. Aiken, which I first put into Burns's hands, he read with unmixed delight, notwithstanding his former efforts in that very difficult species of writing; and I have little doubt it had some effect in polishing his subsequent compositions."

* "May 1803. Died at Edinburgh, Mr. James Sibbald, Bookseller."—*Scots Mag.*

(2) TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

(CHAMBERS, 1838.)

. . . . . .

. . . To tell the truth among friends, I feel a miserable blank in my heart, with want of her, and I don't think I shall ever meet with so delicious an armful again. She has her faults; and so have you and I; and so has everybody:

Their tricks and craft hae put me daft;
They've ta'en me in and a' that;
But clear your decks, and here's "The Sex!"
I like the jads for a' that:
For a' that and a' that,
And twice as muckle's a' that, &c.

. . . . . .

I have met with a very pretty girl, a Lothian farmer's daughter, whom I have almost persuaded to accompany me to the west country, should I ever return to settle there. By the by, a Lothian farmer is about an Ayrshire Squire of the lower kind; and I had a most delicious ride from Leith to her house yesternight, in a hackney-coach, with her brother and two sisters, and brother's wife. We had dined all together at a common friend's house in Leith, and danced, drank, and sang till late enough. The night was dark, the claret had been good, and I thirsty. . . .

ROBT. BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *7th Jan.*, 1787.

So early as on the 7th December 1786, in the poet's letter to Gavin Hamilton, followed by a letter to Mr. Ballantine, six days later, he announces as a fact that the members of the Caledonian Hunt, one and all, in terms of a record entered in the minute book of their meetings, had subscribed for his forthcoming Edition—nay more, that for each copy "they are to pay one guinea." It now appears, however, that the sanguine poet had mistaken Lord Glencairn's promise to make

some such motion at an early meeting of his brethren of "The Hunt," for an assurance that such motion had already been made and assented to. Here follows an

EXCERPT FROM MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE ROYAL CALEDONIAN HUNT,

Held at Edinburgh on 10th Jan. 1787.

"A motion being made by the Earl of Glencairn, and seconded by Sir John Whitefoord, in favor of Mr. Burns, Ayrshire, who had dedicated the new Edition of his poems to the Caledonian Hunt, the meeting were of opinion that, in consideration of his superior merit, as well as of the compliment paid to them, Mr. Hagart should be directed to subscribe for one hundred copies, in their name, for which he should pay to Mr. Burns twenty-five pounds, upon the publication of his book."

(3) TO MR. MACKENZIE, SURGEON, MAUCHLINE.

(CHAMBERS, 1851.)

MY DEAR SIR,—Yours gave me something like the pleasure of an old friend's face. I saw *your* friend and *my* honored patron, Sir John Whitefoord, just after I read your letter, and gave him your respectful compts. He was pleased to say many handsome things of you, which I heard with the more satisfaction, as I knew them to be just.

His son John, who calls very frequently on me, is in a fuss to-day like a coronation. This is the great day—the Assembly and Ball of the Caledonian Hunt; and John has had the good luck to pre-engage the hand of the beauty-famed, and wealth-celebrated MISS M'ADAM, our country-woman. Between friends, John is desperately in for it there, and I am afraid will be desperate indeed.*

* The reader may here be reminded of the poet's clever rhyming epistle to Mr. M'Adam of Craigengillan, in which his two daughters are thus referred to:—

"Heaven spare you lang to kiss the breath
O' mony flowery simmers,
And bless your bonie lasses baith—
I'm tauld they're lo'esome kimmers."

I am sorry to send you the last speech and dying words of the LOUNGER.

A gentleman waited on me yesterday, and gave me, by LORD EGLINTON'S order, ten guineas by way of subscription for a brace of copies of my 2nd edition.

I met with Lord Maitland* and a brother of his to-day at breakfast. They are exceedingly easy, accessible, agreeable fellows, and seemingly pretty clever.—I am ever, My Dr. Sir, Yours, ROBT. BURNS.†

EDINR. 11*th Jan.* 1787.

(1) TO THE EARL OF EGLINTON.‡

(CURRIE, 1800.)

EDINBURGH, 11*th January*, 1787.

MY LORD,—As I have but slender pretensions to philosophy, I cannot rise to the exalted ideas of a citizen of the world; but have all those national prejudices, which I believe glow peculiarly strong in the

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In "Boswelliana," consisting of extracts from the Common-place Book of James Boswell, recently printed for the Grampian Club, and edited by Dr. Chas. Rogers, we find a very curious reference to the daughters of Craigengillan. "Dr. Grant asked me if Mr. Macadam had but one daughter, I said he had, properly speaking, but one. She is good-looking, but the other—poor girl!—is very ugly. My wife said it was hard that want of good looks should cause her to be reckoned *not his daughter*. She was the more a daughter on that account, as being more likely to continue with him."

* Afterwards eighth Earl of Lauderdale; at this time a conspicuous member of the House of Commons, on the side of the opposition.

† The holograph of this letter is in the hands of John Whitefoord Mackenzie, Esq., W.S., son of the bard's correspondent, to whom the public is indebted for seeing it in its complete form.

‡ This was Archibald, XI. Earl of Eglinton, who died in 1796, and was succeeded by his cousin, Hugh Montgomerie of Coilsfield. The poet's patron and correspondent was born about the year 1733, and having been brought up a soldier, he became Colonel of the Scots Greys, and a General in the army. His lordship was twice married, and by his second wife had two daughters, of whom, the elder, Lady Mary (born 5th March 1787) married the eldest son of Earl Hugh, and became the mother of Archibald-William, who succeeded as XIII. "Earl of Eglintoune" in December 1819, the hero of the "Tournament," and the "Burns Festival."

breast of a Scotsman. There is scarcely any thing, to which I am so feelingly alive as the honor and welfare of my country; and, as a poet, I have no higher enjoyment than singing her sons and daughters. Fate had cast my station in the veriest shades of life; but never did a heart pant more ardently, than mine, to be distinguished; though, till very lately, I looked in vain on every side for a ray of light. It is easy then to guess how much I was gratified with the countenance and approbation of one of my country's most illustrious sons, when Mr. Wauchope called on me yesterday on the part of your Lordship.* Your munificence, my Lord, certainly deserves my very grateful acknowledgements; but your patronage is a bounty peculiarly suited to my feelings. I am not master enough of the etiquette of life to know, whether there be not some impropriety in troubling your Lordship with my thanks, but my heart whispered me to do it.† From the emotions of my inmost soul I do it. Selfish ingratitude I hope I am incapable of; and mercenary servility, I trust, I shall ever have as much honest pride as to detest. R. B.

(4) TO JOHN BALLANTINE, ESQ., BANKER, AYR.

(*Partly by* CROMEK *in* 1808, *and completed in* DOUGLAS, 1877.)

MY HONORED FRIEND,—It gives me a secret comfort to observe in myself that I am not yet so far gone as Willie Gaw's skate—"past redemption"‡—for I

* This is explained in the poet's letter of same date addressed to Dr. Mackenzie. The gentleman who brought the Earl's present was John Wauchope, Esq., W.S., a splendid portrait of whom by Raeburn, attracted much attention in the Edinburgh Raeburn Exhibition.

† The similarity of expression between this and the words used in his letter to Sir John Whitefoord at page 222 *supra* has been referred to.

‡ This is one of many such old saws, picked up by the poet from the lips of his own mother, who possessed a rich store of traditionary humor and wisdom. —CROMEK.

have still this favorable symptom of Grace, that when my conscience, as in the case of this letter, tells me that I am leaving something undone that I ought to do, it teases me eternally till I do it.

I am still "dark as was chaos" in respect to futurity. My generous friend, Mr. Peter Miller, brother to the Justice Clerk, has been talking with me about a lease of some farm or other in an estate called Dalswinton, which he has lately bought, near Dumfries. Some life-rented embittering recollections whisper me that I will be happier any where than in my old neighborhood, but Mr. Miller is no judge of land; and though I dare say he means to favor me, yet he may give me, in his opinion, an advantageous bargain that may ruin me. I am to take a tour by Dumfries as I return, and have promised to meet Mr. Miller on his lands some time in May.

I went to a Mason-lodge yesternight,* where the most Worshipful Grand Master, Charteris, and all the Grand Lodge of Scotland visited. The meeting was numerous and elegant; all the different Lodges about town were present, in all their pomp.

The Grand Master, who presided with great solemnity and honor to himself as a gentleman and Mason, among other general toasts, gave "Caledonia, and Caledonia's Bard, Brother B——," which rung through the whole assembly with multiplied honors and repeated acclamations. As I had no idea such a thing would happen, I was downright thunderstruck, and, trembling in every nerve made the best return in my power. Just as I had finished, some of the Grand officers said, so loud that I could hear, with a most comforting accent, "Very well, indeed!" which set me something to rights again.

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* On the authority of a little masonic brochure, called "A Winter with Robert Burns," we may state that this was St. Andrew's Lodge, which met on Friday 12th January, not 13th as might be assumed from the date of the poet's letter.

I have just now had a visit from my Landlady, who is a staid, sober, piously-disposed, sculdudry-abhorring widow, coming on her climacterick,* she is at present in great tribulation respecting some "Daughters of Belial" who are on the floor immediately above. My Landlady, who, as I have said, is a flesh-disciplining, godly matron, firmly believes her husband is in heaven; and having been very happy with him on earth, she vigorously and perseveringly practices some of the most distinguished Christian virtues, such as attending church, railing against vice, &c., that she may be qualified to meet her quondam Bed-fellow in that happy place where the unclean and the ungodly shall never enter. This no doubt requires some strong exertions of self-denial in a hale well-kept widow of forty-five; and as our floors are low and ill-plastered, we can easily distinguish our laughter-loving, night-rejoicing neighbors when they are eating, when they are drinking, when they are singing, when they are &c., &c. My worthy Landlady tosses sleepless and unquiet—"looking for rest and finding none"—the whole night. Just now she told me—though by the by, she is sometimes dubious that I am, in her own phrase, "but a rough an' roun' Christian"—that "we should not be uneasy and envious because the wicked enjoy the good things of this life;" for these base jades who, in her own words, "lie up gandy-going with their filthy fellows, drinking the best of wines, and singing abominable songs, they shall one day lie in hell, weeping and wailing and gnashing their teeth over a cup of God's wrath!"

I have to-day corrected my 152d page. My best good wishes to Mr. Aiken. I am ever, Dr. Sir, Your much indebted, humble Servt. ROBT. BURNS.

EDINR. 14*th Jan.*, 1787.

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* If Chambers was correctly informed by John Richmond, this worthy lady was "Mrs Carfrae in Baxter's Close, Lawnmarket, first scale stair on the left

It may interest some readers to know that the 152d page of the author's Edinburgh edition completes (pat to the subject of his landlady's oration given above) the "Address to the Unco Guid, or the Rigidly Righteous." What a rich illustration of that characteristic effusion, is the portion of the foregoing letter which we recommend for careful study. After the death of the gentleman to whom the letter is addressed, it fell into the possession of Professor Leslie, at the sale of whose library and manuscripts it was purchased by the late Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe. It is .not known what Mr. Sharpe did with the poet's holograph; but a careful copy of the letter, in his own hand, was presented by him to Mr. George Thomson, and that copy became the property of the present Lord Dalhousie, along with the invaluable set of manuscripts which comprise the bard's portion of the "Thomson Correspondence," purchased by his Lordship in 1852.

(2) TO MRS. DUNLOP, OF DUNLOP.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

EDINBURGH, 15*th January* 1787.

MADAM.—Yours of the 9th current, which I am this moment honored with, is a deep reproach to me for ungrateful neglect. I will tell you the real truth, for I am miserably awkward at a fib. I wished to have written to Dr. Moore, before I wrote to you; but though every day since I received yours of December 30th, the idea, the wish to write to him has constantly pressed on my thoughts, yet I could not for my soul set about it. I know his fame and character, and I am one of "the sons of little men." To write him a mere matter-of-fact affair, like a merchant's order, would be disgracing the little character I have; and to write the author of "The View of Society and Manners" a letter of sentiment—I declare every artery

hand in going down, first door in the stair." The latter portion of the above letter was written on a Sunday.

runs cold at the thought. I shall try, however, to write to him to-morrow or next day. His kind interposition in my behalf I have already experienced,* as a gentleman waited on me the other day, on the part of Lord Eglinton, with ten guineas, by way of subscription for two copies of my next edition.

The word you object to in the mention I have made of my glorious countryman, and your immortal ancestor, is indeed borrowed from Thomson; but it does not strike me as an improper epithet.† I distrusted my own judgment on your finding fault with it, and applied for the opinion of some of the literati here, who honor me with their critical strictures, and they all allow it to be proper. The song you ask I cannot recollect, and I have not a copy of it. I have not composed anything on the great Wallace, except what you have seen in print, and the enclosed, which I will print in this edition. You will see I have mentioned some others of the name. When I composed my "Vision" long ago, I had attempted a description of Kyle, of which the additional stanzas are a part, as it originally stood.‡ My heart glows with a wish to do justice to the merits of the "Saviour of his Country," which sooner or later I shall at least attempt.

You are afraid I shall grow intoxicated with my prosperity as a poet: alas! Madam, I know myself and the world too well. I do not mean any airs of affected modesty; I am willing to believe that my abilities

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* It thus appears that the Earl of Eglinton's kind attention to Burns arose through the interposition of Dr. Moore, who had found an opportunity to point out to his lordship the great merits of the ploughman poet.

† "———— the patriotic tide
That stream'd thro' great, unhappy Wallace' heart."

The phrase thus objected to was, in 1793, altered to

That stream'd thro' Wallace's undaunted heart."

‡ Stanzas in *The Vision*, beginning

"By stately tower or palace fair," and ending with the first Duan.

deserve some notice; but in a most enlightened, informed age and nation, when poetry is and has been the study of men of the first natural genius, aided with all the powers of polite learning, polite books, and polite company — to be dragged forth to the full glare of learned and polite observation, with all my imperfections of awkward rusticity, and crude unpolished ideas on my head — I assure you, Madam, I do not dissemble when I tell you I tremble for the consequences. The novelty of a poet in my obscure situation, without any of those advantages which are reckoned necessary for that character, at least at this time of day, has raised a partial tide of public notice which has borne me to a height, where I am absolutely, feelingly certain, my abilities are inadequate to support me; and too surely do I see that time when the same tide will leave me, and recede perhaps as far below the mark of truth. I do not say this in the ridiculous affectation of self-abasement and modesty. I have studied myself, and know what ground I occupy; and, however a friend or the world may differ from me in that particular, I stand for my own opinion, in silent resolve, with all the tenaciousness of property. I mention this to you, once for all, to disburthen my mind, and I do not wish to hear or say more about it.—But,

"When proud fortune's ebbing tide recedes,"

you will bear me witness, that when my bubble of fame was at the highest, I stood unintoxicated with the inebriating cup in my hand, looking forward with rueful resolve to the hastening time, when the blow of Calumny should dash it to the ground, with all the eagerness of vengeful triumph.

* * * * * * *

Your patronizing me and interesting yourself in my fame and character as a poet, I rejoice in; it exalts

me in my own idea; and whether you can or cannot aid me in my subscription is a trifle. Has a paltry subscription-bill any charms to the heart of a bard, compared with the patronage of the descendant of the immortal Wallace? R. B.

(1) TO DR. JOHN MOORE, LONDON.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

EDINBURGH, 17*th January* 1787.

SIR,—Mrs. Dunlop has been so kind as to send me extracts of letters she has had from you, where you do the rustic bard the honor of noticing him and his works. Those who have felt the anxieties and solicitudes of authorship can only know what pleasure it gives to be noticed in such a manner, by judges of the first character. Your criticisms, Sir, I receive with reverence; only I am sorry they mostly came too late; a peccant passage or two that I would certainly have altered were gone to the press.

The hope to be admired for ages is, in by far the greatest part of those even who are authors of repute, an unsubstantial dream. For my part, my first ambition was, and still my strongest wish is, to please my compeers, the rustic inmates of the hamlet, while ever-changing language and manners shall allow me to be relished and understood. I am very willing to admit that I have some poetical abilities; and as few if any writers, either moral or poetical, are intimately acquainted with the classes of mankind among whom I have chiefly mingled, I may have seen men and manners in a different phasis from what is common, which may assist originality of thought. Still I know very well the novelty of my character has by far the greatest share in the learned and polite notice I have

lately had : and in a language where Pope and Churchill have raised the laugh, and Shenstone and Gray drawn the tear ; where Thomson and Beattie have painted the landscape, and Lyttelton and Collins described the heart, I am not vain enough to hope for distinguished poetic fame. R. B.

Dr. Currie has printed in full the reply of Dr. Moore (dated 23rd January) to the above letter, and we shall content ourselves with presenting a quotation merely :—"If I may judge of the author's disposition from his works, with all the other good qualities of a poet, he has not the *irritable* temper ascribed to that race of men by one of their number, whom you have the happiness to resemble in ease and *curious felicity* of expression. Indeed the poetical beauties, however original and brilliant, and lavishly scattered, are not all I admire in your works ; the love of your native country, that feeling sensibility to all the objects of humanity, and the independent spirit which breathes through the whole, give me a most favorable impression of the poet, and have made me often regret that I did not see the poems, the certain effect of which would have been my seeing the author last summer, when I was longer in Scotland than I have been for many years. . . . .

"Before I received your letter, I sent enclosed in a letter to Mrs. Dunlop, a sonnet by Miss Williams, a young poetical lady, which she wrote on reading your *Mountain Daisy ;* perhaps it may not displease you."

SONNET BY HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

While soon 'the garden's flaunting flowers' decay,
  And scatter'd on the earth neglected lie,
The 'Mountain Daisy,' cherish'd by the ray
  A poet drew from heav'n, shall never die.

Ah, like that simple flower the poet rose,
  'Mid penury's bare soil and bitter gale ;
He felt each storm that on the mountain blows,
  And never knew the shelter of the vale.

By genius in her native vigor nurst,
  On Nature with impassion'd look he gazed ;
Then through the cloud of adverse Fortune, burst
  Indignant, and in light unborrow'd blazed.

SCOTIA ! from rude affliction shield thy Bard,
His Heav'n-taught numbers Fame herself will guard.

January 25th, 1787.—On this, the Poet's Birth-day, the Earl of Glencairn presented to him a silver snuff-box. The lid shows a five-shilling coin of the reign of Charles I., dated 1644. On an inner and covered bottom of the box, Burns has, with his own hand, recorded the fact and date of the presentation.

In the Poet's Monument at Edinburgh, there is exhibited the original letter sent to him by the Earl of Buchan, dated 1st February 1787. It contains such advices as that nobleman might suppose his rank entitled him to offer to a person in the circumstances and position of the Ploughman-Poet of Ayrshire. The document bears marks of having been carried for some time in the bard's pocket, and, in particular, the back of it shows that he made use of it for recording, in a rough pencil scrawl, eight lines of the song "Bonie Dundee." That seems to have been noted from the singing of his Crochallan companion, Mr. Robert Cleghorn, farmer at Saughton Mills, near Edinburgh.

In the British Museum is preserved a holograph scroll or copy of Burns's reply to the Earl, which seems to have been used by Dr. Currie to print from, in his volume of the Bard's correspondence, although his divergences from the original are manifold. It is thus docqueted by that biographer, or by Mr. John Syme, who assisted in arranging the materials for him: —"Swift says, 'Praise is like ambergrise; a little is odorous —much stinks.'"

TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

[*3d Feb.* 1787.]

MY LORD,—The honor your Lordship has done me, by your notice and advice in yours of the 1st instant, I shall ever gratefully remember:—

> "Praise from thy lips 'tis mine with joy to boast,
> They best can give it who deserve it most."

Your Lordship touches the darling chord of my heart, when you advise me to fire my muse at Scottish story and Scottish scenes. I wish for nothing

more than to make a leisurely pilgrimage through my native country; to sit and muse on those once hard-contended fields, where Caledonia, rejoicing, saw her bloody Lion borne through broken ranks to victory and fame; and, catching the inspiration, to pour the deathless names in song. But, my Lord, in the midst of these delighting enthusiastic reveries, a long-visaged, dry, moral-looking phantom strides across my imagination, and with the frigid air of a declaiming Preacher, sets off with a text of Scripture, thus—

"I, Wisdom, dwell with Prudence. Friend, I do not come to open the ill-closed wounds of your follies and misfortunes, merely to give you pain: I wish through these wounds to imprint a lasting lesson on your heart. I will not mention how many of my salutary advices you have despised: I have given you line upon line and precept upon precept; but while I have been chalking you out the right way to wealth and godly character, you, with audacious effrontery, have zigzagged across the path, contemning me to my face: you know the consequences. It is not yet three months since home was so hot for your stay that you were on the wing for the western side of the Atlantic, not to make a fortune, but to hide your disgrace.

"Now that your dear-loved Scotia about whom you make such a racket, puts it in your power to return to the situation of your forefathers, will you follow these will-o'-wisp meteors of fancy and whim, till they bring you once more to the brink of ruin? I grant that the utmost ground you can occupy is but half a step from Want; but still it is half a step from it. If all that I can say is ineffectual, let her who seldom calls to you in vain, let the call of Pride prevail with you. You know how you feel at the iron grip of ruthless oppression: you know how you bear the galling sneer of contumelious greatness. I tender you the

conveniences, the comforts of life, independence and character, on the one hand; I hold you out servility, dependence, and wretchedness, on the other. I will not insult your common sense by bidding you make a choice."

This, my Lord, is an unanswerable harangue. I must return to my humble station, and woo my rustic Muse in my wonted way at the plough-tail. Still, my Lord, while the drops of life warm my heart, gratitude to that dear-loved country in which I boast my birth, and gratitude to those her distinguished sons, who have honored me so much with their patronage and approbation, shall, while stealing through my humble shades, ever distend my bosom, and at times draw forth, as now, the swelling tear. R. B.

(1) TO ROBERT CLEGHORN, SAUGHTON MILLS,*

ENCLOSING AN OLD SONG WITH ADDITIONS.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM NOTES, 1839.)

DEAR CLEGHORN,—You will see by the above that I have added a stanza to "Bonie Dundee." If you think it will do, you may set it agoing,

> 'Upon a ten string'd instrument,
> And on the psaltery.'

R. B.

To Mr. Cleghorn, farmer. God bless the trade!

* The original letter is now in the possession of Mr. James Raymond Claghorn, of Philadelphia. We give a fac-simile of it.

(1) TO THE REV. GEORGE LAWRIE,

NEWMILNS, NEAR KILMARNOCK.

(CURRIE, 1802.)

EDINBURGH, *Feb.* 5, 1787.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—When I look at the date of your kind letter, my heart reproaches me severely with ingratitude in neglecting so long to answer it. I will not trouble you with any account, by way of apology, of my hurried life and distracted attention; do me the justice to believe that my delay by no means proceeded from want of respect. I feel, and ever shall feel for you the mingled sentiments of esteem for a friend, and reverence for a father.

I thank you, Sir, with all my soul for your friendly hints, though I do not need them so much as my friends are apt to imagine. You are dazzled with newspaper accounts and distant reports; but, in reality, I have no great temptation to be intoxicated with the cup of prosperity. Novelty may attract the attention of mankind awhile; to it I owe my present *éclat;* but I see the time not far distant when the popular tide which has borne me to a height of which I am, perhaps, unworthy, shall recede with silent celerity, and leave me a barren waste of sand, to descend at my leisure to my former station. I do not say this in the affectation of modesty; I see the consequence is unavoidable, and am prepared for it. I had been at a good deal of pains to form a just, impartial estimate of my intellectual powers before I came here; I have not added, since I came to Edinburgh, anything to the account; and I trust I shall take every atom of it back to my shades, the coverts of my unnoticed early years.

In Dr. Blacklock, whom I see very often, I have

found what I would have expected in our friend—a clear head and an excellent heart.

By far the most agreeable hours I spend in Edinburgh must be placed to the account of Miss Lawrie and her pianoforte. I cannot help repeating to you and Mrs. Lawrie a compliment that Mr. Mackenzie, the celebrated *Man of Feeling*, paid to Miss Lawrie the other night at the concert. I had come in at the interlude, and sat down by him till I saw Miss Lawrie in a seat not very far distant, and went up to pay my respects to her. On my return to Mr. Mackenzie, he asked me who she was: I told him 'twas the daughter of a reverend friend of mine in the West country. He returned, there was something very striking, to his idea, in her appearance. On my desiring to know what it was, he was pleased to say: "She has a great deal of the elegance of a well-bred lady about her, with all the sweet simplicity of a country girl."

My compliments to all the happy inmates of St. Margaret's, I am, my dear Sir,—Yours most gratefully,

ROBERT BURNS.

MINUTE OF THE CANONGATE KILWINNING LODGE OF FREEMASONS, EDINBURGH.

"*1st February* 1787.—There being no meeting in January, the Lodge met this evening. The following gentlemen were entered apprentices:—Mr. Burns, Mr. Spied, Captain Bartlet, Mr. Haig, G. Douglas, Esq., E. B. Clive, Esq.; Mr. Maule, Mr. Wotherspoon, Mr. Moir, Mr. Lindsay Carnegie, Mr. Archibald Millar, and Mr. James Buchan. There were also initiated—Colonel Dalrymple of Inveresk, Captain Hammond of Marchfield, Cramond, and J. Hammond, Esq.

The R. W. Master having observed that Brother Burns was at present in the Lodge, who is well known as a great poetic writer, and for a late publication of his works, which have been universally commended, submitted that he should be assumed a member of this Lodge, which was unanimously agreed to, and he was assumed accordingly. Having spent

the evening in a very social manner, as the meetings of the Lodge always have been, it was adjourned till next monthly meeting.

ALEX. FERGUSON, M.
JO. MILLAR, J.W. CHAS. MORE, D.M."

Much has been said and written, and even painted, on the subject of Burns's formal inauguration, as Poet Laureate of the Canongate Kilwinning Lodge; but after careful research among its records, we find that the above is the only notice of his presence at any meeting of the Lodge.

Cunningham, in his Biography of Burns, states that a few days after reaching Edinburgh "he found his way to the lonely grave of Fergusson, and, kneeling down, kissed the sod.". But in the following document, dated after two months' residence in the city, his language leads to the inference that he had not yet ascertained the exact spot:—"I am sorry *to be told* that the remains lie in your church-yard unnoticed and unknown."

(1) TO THE HONORABLE THE BAILIES OF CANONGATE, EDINBURGH.

GENTLEMEN,—I am sorry to be told that the remains of Robert Fergusson, the so justly celebrated poet, a man whose talents for ages to come will do honor to our Caledonian name, lie in your church-yard among the ignoble dead, unnoticed and unknown.

Some memorial to direct the steps of the lovers of Scottish song, when they wish to shed a tear over the "narrow house" of the bard who is no more, is surely a tribute due to Fergusson's memory—a tribute I wish to have the honor of paying.

I petition you then, Gentlemen, to permit me to lay a simple stone over his revered ashes, to remain an unalienable property to his deathless fame. I have the honor to be, Gentlemen, your very humble Servant,

ROBERT BURNS.

6th Feb. 1787.

This petition, by mistake addressed to the Canongate Magistrates, eventually reached the proper parties, namely, the Managers of the Kirk and the Kirkyard Funds of Canongate, who, at a meeting held in their Session-house on the 22d day of February 1787, had the matter brought formally before them by their Treasurer, who produced the poet's petition. That document having been read and considered, was ordered to be engrossed in their Sederunt-book, followed by a *Grant* in these terms :—

"The said managers, in consideration of the laudable and disinterested motion of Mr. Burns, and the propriety of his request, did, and hereby do, unanimously grant power and liberty to the said Robert Burns to erect a headstone at the grave of the said Robert Fergusson, and to keep up and preserve the same to his memory in all time coming."

"Extracted forth of the records of the managers, by
WILLIAM SPROTT, *Clerk*."

(1) TO MR. PETER STUART,

EDITOR OF THE 'STAR' NEWSPAPER, LONDON.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

EDINBURGH, *Feb.* 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,—You may think, and too justly, that I am a selfish, ungrateful fellow, having received so many repeated instances of kindness from you, and yet never putting pen to paper to say, thank you; but if you knew what a devil of a life my conscience has led me on that account, your good heart would think yourself too much avenged. By the by, there is nothing in the whole frame of man, which seems to me so unaccountable as that thing called Conscience. Had the troublesome yelping cur powers efficient to prevent a mischief, he might be of use; but at the beginning of the business, his feeble efforts are to the workings of passion as the infant frosts of an autumnal morning to the unclouded fervor of the rising sun: and no sooner are the tumultuous doings

of the wicked deed over, than, amidst the bitter native consequences of folly, in the very vortex of our horrors, up starts Conscience and harrows us with the feelings of the damned.

I have enclosed you, by way of expiation, some verse and prose, that, if they merit a place in your truly entertaining miscellany, you are welcome to. The prose extract is literally as Mr. Sprott sent it me.

The inscription on the Stone will be as follows:—

"HERE LIES ROBERT FERGUSSON, POET.

Born, September 5 1751.—Died, 16 October 1774.

No sculptur'd marble here, nor pompous lay,
'No storied urn nor animated bust,'
This simple stone directs pale SCOTIA'S way
To pour her sorrows o'er her POET'S dust."

On the other side of the Stone will be inscribed:—

"By special grant of the Managers to Robert Burns, who erected this stone, this burial-place is to remain for ever sacred to the memory of Robert Fergusson." R. B.

(2) TO DR. MOORE, LONDON.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

EDINBURGH, *15th Feb.* 1787.

REVERED SIR,—Pardon my seeming neglect in delaying so long to acknowledge the honor you have done me in your kind notice of me, January 23d. Not many months ago I knew no other employment than following the plough, nor could boast anything higher than a distant acquaintance with a country clergyman. Mere greatness never embarrasses me; I have nothing to ask from the great, and I do not fear their judgment; but genius, polished by learning, and at its proper point of elevation in the eye of the world, this

of late I frequently meet with, and tremble at its approach. I scorn the affectation of seeming modesty to cover self-conceit. That I have some merit I do not deny; but I see with frequent wringings of heart, that the novelty of my character, and the honest national prejudice of my countrymen, have borne me to a height altogether untenable to my abilities.

For the honor Miss Williams has done me, please, Sir, return her in my name my most grateful thanks. I have more than once thought of paying her in kind, but have hitherto quitted the idea in hopeless despondency. I had never before heard of her; but the other day I got her poems, which for several reasons, some belonging to the head, and others the offspring of the heart, give me a great deal of pleasure. I have little pretensions to critic lore; there are I think two characteristic features in her poetry—the unfettered wild flight of native genius, and the querulous, *sombre* tenderness of 'time settled sorrow.'

I only know what pleases me, often without being able to tell why. R. B.

Burns was indeed, as Lockhart has remarked, "far too busy with society and observation to find time for poetical composition during his first residence in Edinburgh. The magnificent scenery of the capital and its surroundings filled him with extraordinary delight. In the spring mornings he walked very often to the top of Arthur's Seat, and, lying prostrate on the turf, surveyed the rising of the sun out of the sea in silent admiration; his chosen companion on such occasions being that ardent lover of Nature, and learned artist, Mr. Alexander Nasmyth. The Braid Hills, and the Pentlands, to the south of Edinburgh, were also among his favorite morning walks; and it was in some of these that Mr. Dugald Stewart tells us 'he charmed him still more by his private conversation than he had ever done in company.' 'He was,' adds the professor, 'passionately fond of the beauties of Nature, and I recollect once he told me, when I was admiring a distant prospect in one of our morning walks, that the sight of so many smoking cottages gave a pleasure to

his mind which none could understand who had not witnessed, like himself, the happiness and the worth which they contained.' "

([5]) TO JOHN BALLANTINE, ESQ., AYR.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

MY HONORED FRIEND,—I will soon be with you now "in guid black prent;" in a week or two at farthest. I am obliged, against my own wish, to print subscriber's names; so if any of my Ayr friends have subscription-bills, they must be sent in to Creech directly. I am getting my phiz done by an eminent engraver; and if it can be ready in time, I will appear in my book looking, like all other *fools*, to my title-page. I have the honor to be, ever your grateful

ROBT. BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *24th Feb.* 1787.

([1]) TO THE HON. HENRY ERSKINE.

ENCLOSING FRAGMENT—"WHEN GUILDFORD GOOD."

(CHAMBERS, 1851.)

SIR,—I shewed the enclosed political ballad to my Lord Glencairn, to have his opinion whether I should publish it; as I suspect my political tenets, such as they are, may be rather heretical in the opinion of some of my best friends. I have a few first principles in Religion and Politics, which, I believe I would not easily part with; but for all the etiquette of, by whom, in what manner, &c. I would not have a dissocial word about it with any one of God's creature's, particularly an honored patron or respected friend. His lordship seems to think the piece may appear in

print, but desired me to send you a copy for your suffrage, I am, with the sincerest gratitude for the notice with which you have been pleased to honor the rustic bard, Sir, your most devoted, humble servant, ROBT. BURNS.

Two o'clock.

(1) TO THE EARL OF GLENCAIRN.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

MY LORD,—I wanted to purchase a profile of your Lordship, which I was told was to be got in town; but I am truly sorry to see that a blundering painter has spoiled a 'human face divine.' The enclosed stanzas I intended to have written below a picture or profile of your Lordship, could I have been so happy as to procure one with any thing of a likeness.

As I will soon return to my shades, I wanted to have something like a material object for my gratitude. I wanted to have it in my power to say to a friend, there is my noble patron, my generous benefactor. Allow me, my Lord, to publish these verses. I conjure your Lordship by the honest throe of gratitude, by the generous wish of benevolence, by all the powers and feelings which compose the magnanimous mind, do not deny me this petition.* I owe much to your Lordship; and, what has not in some other instances always been the case with me, the weight of the obligation is a pleasing load. I trust I have a heart as independent as your Lordship's, than which I can say nothing more; and I would not be be-

* Currie notes as follows:—"It does not appear that the Earl granted this request, nor have the verses alluded to been found among the manuscripts." They have subsequently been found, and are now in the Poet's monument at Edinburgh. *See* p. 74, *supra*.

holden to favors that would crucify my feelings. Your dignified character in life, and manner of supporting that character, are flattering to my pride ; and I would be jealous of the purity of my grateful attachment, where I was under the patronage of one of the much favored sons of fortune.

Almost every poet has celebrated his patrons, particularly when they were names dear to fame, and illustrious in their country ; allow me then, my Lord, if you think the verses have intrinsic merit, to tell the world how much I have the honor to be your Lordship's highly indebted and ever grateful, humble servant,

ROBT. BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *Feb.* 1787.

(3) TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

(BLACKIE'S ED., 1846.)

EDINBURGH, *March* 8, 1787.

DEAR SIR,—Yours came safe, and I am, as usual, much indebted to your goodness. Poor Captain Montgomery is cast. Yesterday it was tried whether her husband could proceed against the unfortunate lover without first divorcing his wife ; and their Gravities on the Bench were unanimously of opinion that Maxwell may prosecute for damages directly, and need not divorce his wife at all if he pleases ; and Maxwell is immediately, before the Lord Ordinary, to prove, what I dare say will not be denied, the crim-con. Then their Lordships will modify the damages, which I suppose will be pretty heavy, as their Wisdoms have expressed great abhorrence of my gallant right worshipful brother's conduct.*

* For some interesting particulars in regard to this case, see note to *Sappho Rediviva*, Vol. III., p. 43.

O all ye powers of love unfortunate, and friendless woe! pour the balm of sympathising pity on the grief-torn, tender heart of the hapless fair one!

My two songs on Miss W. Alexander and Miss Peggy Kennedy were likewise tried yesterday by a jury of literati, and found defamatory libels against the fastidious powers of Poesy and Taste; and the author forbidden to print them under pain of forfeiture of character. I cannot help almost shedding a tear to the memory of two songs that had cost me some pains, and that I valued a good deal, but I must submit.*

My most respectful compliments to Mrs. Hamilton, and Miss Kennedy.

My poor unfortunate songs come again across my memory, d—n the pedant, frigid soul of criticism for ever and ever,—I am ever, dear Sir, your obliged,

ROBERT BURNS.

(1) TO MR. JAMES CANDLISH,†

STUDENT IN PHYSIC, COLLEGE, GLASGOW.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

EDINBURGH, *March* 21, 1787.

MY EVER DEAR OLD ACQUAINTANCE,—I was equally surprised and pleased at your letter; though I dare say you will think by my delaying so long to write to you,

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* The songs were respectively "The Lass of Ballochmyle," and "Young Peggy blooms, our boniest Lass." See Vol. I., pp. 139 and 322. Peggy was a young relative of Mrs. Hamilton, and the Miss Kennedy, mentioned near the close of the letter, was an unmarried sister of Mrs. Hamilton, who resided in Mr. Hamilton's house.

† Burns seems to have become first acquainted with this correspondent, when they were mere lads, attending the parish school of Dalrymple; after which they were again companions at the Ayr grammar school for a brief period. Most of the poet's editors since Cromek's days have printed with capitals, and inverted commas, the *lady thorn* referred to at the close of this letter; yet not one has ventured to suggest the locality of that "Lady Thorn," which the two schoolfellows once sported about. We suspect that *lady thorn* here is merely another

that I am so drowned in the intoxication of good fortune as to be indifferent to old, and once dear connections. The truth is, I was determined to write a good letter, full of argument, amplification, erudition, and, as Bayes says, *all that.* I thought of it, and thought of it, but for my soul, I cannot; and lest you should mistake the cause of my silence, I just sit down to tell you so. Don't give yourself credit though, that the strength of your logic scares me: the truth is, I never mean to meet you on that ground at all. You have shown me one thing which was to be demonstrated; that strong pride of reasoning, with a little affectation of singularity, may mislead the best of hearts. I, likewise, since you and I were first acquainted, in the pride of despising old women's stories, ventured in "the daring path Spinoza trod," but experience of the weakness, not the strength of human powers, made me glad to grasp at revealed religion.

I must stop, but don't impute my brevity to a wrong cause. I am still, in the Apostle Paul's phrase, "the old man with his deeds" as when we were sporting about the lady-thorn. I shall be four weeks here yet, at least; and so I shall expect to hear from you—welcome sense, welcome nonsense.—I am, with warmest sincerity, my dear old friend, yours &c.

ROB^T. BURNS.

(3) TO MRS. DUNLOP, OF DUNLOP.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

EDINBURGH, *22nd March*, 1787.

MADAM,—I read your letter with watery eyes. A

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name for haw-thorn in blossom, or "May-flower." Mr. Candlish married Jean, a sister of the poet's friend, James Smith of Mauchline, and distinguished himself as a lecturer on medicine, in Edinburgh, and died somewhat suddenly in 1806. He was father of the late Principal Candlish of the New College, Edinburgh.

little, very little while ago, *I had scarce a friend but the stubborn pride of my own bosom;* now I am distinguished, patronized, befriended by you. Your friendly advices, I will not give them the cold name of criticisms, I receive with reverence. I have made some small alterations in what I before had printed. I have the advice of some very judicious friends among the literati here, but with them I sometimes find it necessary to claim the privilege of thinking for myself. The noble Earl of Glencairn, to whom I owe more than to any man, does me the honor of giving me his strictures: his hints, with respect to impropriety or indelicacy, I follow implicitly.

You kindly interest yourself in my future views and prospects; there I can give you no light. It is all

> "Dark as was Chaos ere the infant sun
> Was roll'd together, or had tried his beams
> Athwart the gloom profound."

The appellation of a Scottish bard is by far my highest pride; to continue to deserve it is my most exalted ambition. Scottish scenes and Scottish story are the themes I could wish to sing. I have no dearer aim than to have it in my power, unplagued with the routine of business — for which heaven knows I am unfit enough — to make leisurely pilgrimages through Caledonia; to sit on the fields of her battles; to wander on the romantic banks of her rivers; and to muse by the stately towers or venerable ruins, once the honored abodes of her heroes.

But these are all Utopian thoughts: I have dallied long enough with life; 'tis time to be in earnest. I have a fond, an aged mother to care for: and some other bosom-ties perhaps equally tender. Where the individual only suffers by the consequences of his own thoughtlessness, indolence, or folly, he may be excusable; nay, shining abilities, and some of the nobler

virtues, may half sanctify a heedless character; but where God and nature have entrusted the welfare of others to his care; where the trust is sacred, and the ties are dear, that man must be far gone in selfishness, or strangely lost to reflection, whom these connexions will not rouse to exertion.

I guess that I shall clear between two and three hundred pounds by my authorship; with that sum I intend, so far as I may be said to have any intention, to return to my old acquaintance, the plough, and, if I can meet with a lease by which I can live, to commence farmer. I do not intend to give up poetry; being bred to labor, secures me independence, and the Muses are my chief, sometimes have been my only enjoyment. If my practice second my resolution, I shall have principally at heart the serious business of life; but while following my plough, or building up my shocks, I shall cast a leisure glance to that dear, that only feature of my character, which gave me the notice of my country, and the patronage of a Wallace.

Thus, honored Madam, I have given you the bard, his situation, and his views, native as they are in his own bosom. ROB^T. BURNS.

THE EDINBURGH JOURNAL.

In Currie's Edition of Burns's works there appeared a fragment of a Diary or journal, consisting of the Poet's observations on men and manners, commenced by him in Edinburgh, in April, 1787. "By this time," says Mr. Douglas, "Burns had finished the work of revising the sheets of his new edition, and had to wait only a few weeks to see it in shape for delivery to the public. His time was not wholly spent in mere social enjoyments; he did not fail to mix by times with the men eminent in letters and philosophy, who then shed lustre on the name of Scotland. Lockhart has remarked that 'Burns's poetry might have procured him access to these circles; but it was the extraordinary resources he displayed in conversation, the strong sagacity of his observations on life

and manners, the splendor of his wit, and the glowing energy of his eloquence, that made him the serious object of admiration among these practiced masters of the arts of talk. Even the stateliest of these philosophers had enough to do to maintain the attitude of equality when brought into contact with Burns's gigantic understanding; and every one of them whose impressions on the subject have been recorded agrees in pronouncing his conversation to have been the most remarkable thing about him.' 'We are thus,' says Chambers, 'left to understand that the best of Burns has not been, and was not of a nature to be, transmitted to posterity.'

"It was of the document which we are now, in the order of chronology, to lay before the reader that the elder D'Israeli in his nice speculations 'On the Literary Character' thus wrote:—'Once we were nearly receiving from the hand of genius the most curious sketches of the temper, the irascible humors, the delicacy of the soul, even to its shadowiness, from the warm *sbozzos* of Burns, when he began a diary of his heart—a narrative of characters and events, and a chronology of his emotions. It was natural for such a creature of sensation and passion to project such a regular task, but quite impossible to get through it.'

"Lockhart, on this point thus wrote in 1828:—'That most curious document, it is to be observed, has not yet been printed entire; another generation will, no doubt, see the whole of the confession.' Fifty years, however, have elapsed (says Mr. Douglas, writing in 1878), since that writer penned his remark, and the world has seen no more of the diary than Dr. Currie was pleased to publish: where the MS. has gone to, we are at a loss to know. That biographer says in reference to the suppressed portions:—'The most curious particulars in the book are the delineations of characters he met with. These are not numerous; but they are chiefly of persons of distinction in the republic of letters, and nothing but the delicacy, and respect due to living characters prevents us from committing them to the press. Though it appears that in his conversation he was sometimes disposed to sarcastic remarks on men with whom he lived, nothing of this kind is discoverable in these more deliberate efforts of his understanding, which, while they exhibit great clearness of discrimination, manifest also the wish, as well as the power, to bestow high and generous praise.'"

The history of the discovery of the complete Diary is not without interest. Mr. Paterson, Publisher of Douglas's Edi-

tion, had, during its progress through the press, advertised for the missing MS. and inserted enquiries after it in London *Notes and Queries*. His efforts were fruitless. At length, in February, 1879, shortly after the appearance of his fourth volume, he received a letter from Mr. Macmillan, Publisher, London, telling him that he had the MS. in his possession, and had so had it for 20 years, but had not realized its importance and full bearing till on reading the remarks of Mr. Douglas, and others, quoted above. Mr. Douglas tells us that Mr. Macmillan had really placed the holograph in the hands of the late Alexander Smith, Author of the *Life Drama*, who edited for him the Edition known as the "Golden Treasury;" but that this gentleman so thoroughly failed to appreciate its importance, that he described it as a tattered volume of early scraps understood to have been presented by the poet to Mrs. Dunlop, which, "after being in the hands of many persons, and at each remove denuded of certain pages, came, through Mr. Stillie, Edinburgh, into the possession of Mr. Macmillan."

Mr. Macmillan also intimated to Mr. Paterson his purpose of giving the unpublished portions of the MS. to the public in the pages of Macmillan's Magazine for March, 1879. It was not, however, till August following that Mr. Douglas was enabled to lay before his readers the full contents of the Poet's Edinburgh Journal. This he was under the necessity of doing in an Appendix. We are happy to be able to be the first to present the precious record in its proper place and relations. We think scarcely anything is better calculated to elevate Burns in the estimation of intelligent persons, than the fact that he, a youthful Ploughman, fresh from the plow, should be able to look with undazzled eyes on all that was eminent in Edinburgh in these, its palmiest, days, to maintain himself as the peer of the noblest and the most learned, and be, further, able thus coolly to set down his estimate of their characters, endowments and peculiarities.—J. H.

EDINBR., *April ninth*, 1787.

As I have seen a good deal of human life in Edinburgh, a great many characters which are new to one bred up in the shades of life as I have been, I am determined to take down my remarks on the spot. Gray observes, in a letter of his to Mr. Palgrave, that

"half a word fixed upon or near the spot, is worth a cart-load of recollection." I don't know how it is with the world in general, but with me, making remarks is by no means a solitary pleasure. I want some one to laugh with me; some one to be grave with me; some one to please me and help my discrimination with his or her own remark; and at times, no doubt, to admire my acuteness and penetration. The World are so busied with selfish pursuits, ambition, vanity, interest or pleasure, that very few think it worth their while to make any observation on what passes around them; except where that observation is a sucker or branch of the darling plant they are rearing in their fancy. Nor am I sure, notwithstanding all the sentimental flights of novel writers and the sage philosophy of moralists, if we are capable of so intimate and cordial a coalition of friendship as that one of us may pour out his bosom, his every thought and floating fancy, his very inmost soul, with unreserved confidence to another, without hazard of losing part of that respect man demands from man; or, from the unavoidable imperfections attending human nature, of one day repenting his confidence.

For these reasons, I am determined to make these pages my *Confidant.* I will sketch every character that anyway strikes me, to the best of my observation, with unshrinking justice; I will insert anecdotes and take down remarks, in the old law phrase, without feud or favor: where I hit on anything clever, my own applause will in some measure feast my vanity; and (begging Patroclus' and Achates's pardon) I think a lock and key a security at least equal to the bosom of any friend whatever.

My own private story likewise, my amours, my rambles, the smiles and frowns of Fortune on my bardship, my poems and fragments that must never see the light, shall be occasionally inserted,—in short,

never did four shillings purchase so much friendship, since Confidence went first to market, or Honesty was set to sale.

To these seemingly invidious, but too just ideas of human friendship I shall cheerfully and truly make one exception—the connection between two persons of different sex, when their interests are united or absorbed by the sacred tie of Love—

> "When thought meets thought ere from the lips it part,
> And each warm wish springs mutual from the heart."

There confidence—confidence that exalts them the more in one another's opinion—confidence that endears them the more to one another's heart, unreservedly and luxuriantly "reigns and revels." But this is not my lot; and in my situation, if I am wise (which, by the by, I have no great chance of being) my fate should be with the Psalmist's sparrow "to watch alone on the house tops." Oh, the pity!!!

A FRAGMENT—*Tune* "Daintie Davie."

> There was a birkie born in Kyle,
> But what na day o' what na style,
> I doubt it's hardly worth the while
> To be sae nice wi' Davie.*
> &c., &c. (See page 125, Vol. I.)

THERE are few of the sore evils under the sun give me more uneasiness and chagrin than the comparison how a man of genius—nay, avowed worth, is everywhere received with the reception which a mere ordinary character, decorated with the trappings and futile distinctions of Fortune, meets. Imagine a man of

* The true date of this composition we hold to be May 1786. He substitutes the name "Davie" for *Robin*, when he inserts it here, as a modest kind of coverture; but his footnote to verse second sufficiently indicates that "Robin" is the name he intends to be sung.

abilities, his breast glowing with honest pride, conscious that men are born equal, still giving that "honor to whom honor is due;" he meets at a great man's table a Squire Something or a Sir Somebody; he knows the noble landlord at heart gives the bard, or whatever he is, a share of his good wishes beyond any at table perhaps; yet how will it mortify him to see a fellow whose abilities would scarcely have made an eight-penny tailor, and whose heart is not worth three farthings, meet with attention and notice that are forgot to the son of Genius and Poverty?

The noble Glencairn has wounded me to the soul here, because I dearly esteem, respect, and love him. He showed so much attention—engrossing attention one day to the only blockhead, as there was not but his lordship, the dunderpate and myself, that I was within half a point of throwing down my gage of contemptuous defiance; but he shook my hand and looked so benevolently good at parting—God bless him! though I should never see him more, I shall love him until my dying day! I am pleased to think I am so capable of the throes of gratitude, as I am miserably deficient in some other virtues.

With Dr. Blair I am more at ease. I never respect him with humble veneration; but when he kindly interests himself in my welfare, or, still more, when he descends from his pinnacle, and meets me on equal ground, my heart overflows with what is called *liking*. When he neglects me for the mere carcass of greatness, or when his eye measures the difference of our points of elevation, I say to myself with scarcely any emotion—What do I care for him or his pomp either?

It is not easy forming an exact-judging judgment of any one: but, in my opinion, Dr. Blair is merely an astonishing proof of what industry and application can do. Natural parts like his are frequently to be

met with—his vanity is proverbially known among his acquaintances—but he is justly at the head of what may be called fine writing; and a critic of the first—the very first rank in prose; even in poesy, a good bard of Nature's making can only take the *pas* of him. He has a heart, not of the finest water, but far from being an ordinary one. In short, he is a truly worthy and most respectable character.*

Mr. GREENFIELD is of a superior order. The bleedings of humanity, the generous resolve, a manly disregard of the paltry subjects of vanity, virgin modesty, the truest taste, and a very sound judgment, characterise him. His being the first speaker I ever heard is perhaps half owing to industry. He certainly possesses no small share of poetic abilities; he is a steady, most disinterested friend, without the least affectation of seeming so; and as a companion, his good sense, his joyous hilarity, his sweetness of manners and modesty, are most engagingly charming.

THE most perfect character I ever saw is Mr. Stewart. An exalted judge of the human heart, and of composition. One of the very first public speakers; and equally capable of generosity as humanity. His principal discriminating feature is—from a mixture of benevolence, strength of mind and manly dignity, he not only at heart values, but in his deportment and address bears himself to all the actors, high and low, in the drama of life, simply as they merit in playing their parts.† Wealth, honors, all that is extraneous

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* Dr. Blair died 27th December 1800, shortly after Dr. Currie had published the first paragraph of the bard's character of him. Subsequent editions contained the second paragraph, when the remarks could no longer give offence to the living subject of them.

† This same high compliment, applied to the same gentleman, and also to Bishop Geddes, occurs more than once in these letters.

of the man, have no more influence with him than they will have at the Last Day. His wit, in the hour of social hilarity, proceeds almost to good-natured waggishness; and in telling a story he particularly excels.

THE next character I shall mention—my worthy bookseller, Mr. Creech—is a strange, multiform character. His ruling passions of the left hand kind are —extreme vanity, and something of the more harmless modifications of selfishness. The one, mixed as it often is with great goodness of heart, makes him rush into all public matters, and take every instance of unprotected merit by the hand, provided it is in his power to hand it into public notice; the other quality makes him, amid all the embarras in which his vanity entangles him, now and then to cast half a squint at his own interest. His parts as a man, his deportment as a gentleman, and his abilities as a scholar, are much above mediocrity. Of all the Edinburgh literati and wits he writes the most like a gentleman. He does not awe you with the profoundness of the philosopher, or strike your eye with the soarings of genius; but he pleases you with the handsome turn of his expression, and the polite ease of his paragraph. His social demeanor and powers, particularly at his own table, are the most engaging I have ever met with. On the whole he is, as I said before, a multiform, but an exceedingly respectable, worthy character.

Of the five preceding sketches of character, those of Dr. Greenfield, Professor Stewart, and Bailie Creech, were made known to the public for the first time on the publication of the entire MS. The comparatively favorable picture given of the last named gentleman forms a pleasing contrast to the versified sketch of him composed at Ellisland as a portion of "The Poet's Progress." But our variable author's opinion

of Creech latterly veered round in his favor again. In January 1789 he wrote of him to Dr. Moore in severe terms; but to the same gentleman he thus expressed himself in two months thereafter:—"I must own that at last Creech has been amicable and fair with me."

The foregoing eulogium on Dugald Stewart corresponds with all that Burns has elsewhere uttered in reference to him. His earliest expressed opinion of him occurs in a letter to Dr. Mackenzie of Mauchline, thus:—"I think his character, divided into ten parts, stand thus—four parts Socrates; four parts Nathaniel; and two parts Shakspeare's Brutus."

Dr. Greenfield had an eventful and melancholy history. He was an effective and popular preacher, and a favorite with Burns both in his office and as a man. He rose to a professorial chair, to becoming colleague with Dr. Blair in the High Church, Edinburgh, and, in 1797, to the dignity of the Moderatorship of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Suddenly his fame and very name were eclipsed.

For some flagrant, but mysterious crime, he was, in 1798, shorn of all his honors and deposed from the ministry, while he himself disappeared from public view, having retired, it is said, to some obscure locality in the north of England, where he lived under an assumed name.*

All the preceding entries in the poet's Journal seem to have been made prior to his leaving Edinburgh on his Border tour on 5th May 1787. What immediately follows may have been suggested to him about the end of June of the same year, in a visit he is supposed to have made to Greenock, in course of his brief tour in the West Highlands.

The following poem is the work of some hapless unknown son of the Muses who deserved a better fate. There is a great deal of "The Voice of Cona" in his solitary, mournful notes; and had the sentiments been clothed in Shenstone's language they would have been no discredit even to that elegant poet.

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* It may be interesting here to note that the Rev. Wm. Greenfield's name is in the subscribers' list for two copies of the author's edition of 1787; and in 1796 he subscribed one guinea for behoof of the deceased poet's widow and family. Professor Stewart in 1787, subscribed for four copies of the poems, and in 1796 for three guineas to the charitable fund. Dr. Hugh Blair in 1787, subscribed for one copy of the poems, and gave nothing for the bard's widow and family in 1796. Creech subscribed for 500 copies of the poems in 1787, and in 1796 gave five guineas to the relief fund referred to.

ELEGY.

Strait is the spot and green the sod
From whence my sorrows flow;
And soundly rests the ever dear
Inhabitant below, etc.

See page 96, Vol. II.

"The Edinburgh Journal" was continued at Ellisland, and for the sake of connection we give the continuation here, which anticipates some of the pieces mentioned in it. These will appear at their proper chronological places.

ELLISLAND, 14*th June* 1788—*Sunday**.

This is now the third day I have been in this country. Lord, what is man! what a bustling little bundle of passions, appetites, ideas, and fancies! and what a capricious kind of existence he has here! If legendary stories be true, there is indeed an *elsewhere* where as Thomson says "Virtue sole survives."

"Tell us ye Dead,
Will none of you in pity disclose the secret
What 'tis you are, and we must shortly be?
. . . . . a little time
Will make us learn'd as you are, and as close."

I am such a coward in life, so tired of the service, that I would almost at any time, with Milton's Adam,

. . . gladly lay me in my mother's lap,
And be at peace;"

but a wife and children—in poetics, "the fair partner of my soul, and the little dear pledges of our mutual love"—these bind me to struggle with the stream, till some chopping squall overset the silly vessel, or, in the listless return of years, its own craziness drive it

* Error in date, Sunday was the 15th.

a wreck. Farewell now to those gilded follies, those garnished vices which, though half sanctified by the bewitching levity of Wit and Humor, are at best but thriftless idling with the precious current of existence —nay, often poisoning the whole that, like the plains of Jericho, 'the water is naught, and the ground barren;' and nothing short of a supernaturally gifted Elisha can ever after heal the evils.

"Wedlock, the circumstance that buckles me hardest to Care—if virtue and religion were to be anything with me but mere names—was what in a few seasons I must have resolved on; in the present case it was unavoidably necessary. Humanity, generosity, honest vanity of character, justice to my own happiness for after life, so far as it could depend (which it surely will a great deal) on internal peace,—all these joined their warmest suffrages, their most powerful solicitations, with a rooted attachment to urge the step I have taken. I can fancy, *how*, but have never seen *where*, I could have made it better. Come then, let me return to my favorite motto, that glorious passage in Young—

'. . . . . on Reason build Resolve,
That column of true majesty in man.'"

June 16th, 1788. Copy of a letter to Lord Buchan in answer to a bombast epistle he sent me when I went first to Edinburgh.

(*See* page 249, Vol. II.)

To the Earl of Eglinton on receiving Ten Guineas as his Lordship's subscription money.

(*See* page 240, Vol. II.)

WRITTEN IN CARSE HERMITAGE.

(*See* page 7, Vol. III.)

ALTERATION OF THE LINES WROTE IN CARSE HERMITAGE.

December 23d, 1788. (*See* page 29, Vol. III.)

[The reader can realize these alterations by comparing the later version, p. 29, Vol. III., with the earlier version, p. 7, same volume.

The pane of glass on which Burns inscribed his verses was purchased at a sale of the effects of a married daughter of Dr. Smith, R.N., who acquired the mansion-house and grounds of Friar's Carse from the Riddell family in 1794. Dr. Smith's death must have occurred a year or two before Cromek's visit to the locality in 1807. That editor was "shocked to find the Hermitage almost gone to decay, the inscribed pane of glass removed, the floor covered with straw, the door thrown open, and the trees broken and trampled down by cattle." The pane subsequently came into the possession of the late Archibald Fullarton, Esq., Publisher, Edinburgh, whose heirs presumably still possess it.]

*VERSICLES ON SIGN-POSTS.

(*See* page 38, Vol. III.)

TO ROBT. GRAHAM, OF FINTRY, ESQ.

With a request for an Excise Division.—Ellisland, Sep. 8, 1788."

(*See* page 15, Vol. III.)

O bitter mockery of the pompous bier,
While down the wretched VITAL-PART is driven!
The cave-lodged beggar, with a conscience clear,
Expires in rags, unknown, and goes to Heaven.

(*See* page 41, Vol. III.)

CASTLE GORDON.

Intended to be sung to the tune 'Morag.'

Streams that glide in orient plains, &c.

(*See* page 118, Vol. II.)

SCOTS BALLAD.

Tune—'Mary weep no more for me.'

My heart is wae and unco wae
To think upon the raging sea, &c.

(*See* page, 122, Vol. II.)

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* The pieces to which these extracts apply will be found at the places indicated.

SONG.

Tune—'Captain O'Kean.'

The small birds rejoice in the green leaves returning, &c.

(*See* page 168, Vol. II.)

EXTEMPORE—TO MR. GAVIN HAMILTON.

To you, sir, this summons I've sent,
Pray whip till the pownie is fraething,
But if you demand what I want,
I honestly answer you—naething.

(*See* page 16, Vol. II.)

TO THE NIGHTINGALE—ON LEAVING E. C., 1784.

BY MRS. DR. HUNTER, LONDON.

Why from these shades, sweet bird of eve,
Art thou to other regions wildly fled? &c.

A SONNET IN THE MANNER OF PETRARCH.

BY THE SAME.

Come tender thoughts with twilight's pensive gloom
Soften remembrance, mitigate despair.

ON SEEING A FELLOW WOUND A HARE—SPRING.

Inhuman man! curse on thy barb'rous art,
And blasted be thy murder-aiming eye; &c.

(*See* page 64, Vol. III.)

TO MR. GRAHAM OF FINTRY,

On being appointed to my Excise Division.

I call no goddess to inspire my strains, etc.

(*See* page 93, Vol. III.)

SONG.

Tune—'Ewe bughts, Marion.'

Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
And leave old Scotia's shore? etc.

(*See* page 288, Vol. I.)

ELEGY ON CAPT. MATTHEW HENDERSON,

A Gentleman who held the patent for his honors immediately from Almighty God.

O Death, thou tyrant fell and bloody! etc.

(*See* page 155, Vol. III.)

EPITAPH ON ROBERT FERGUSSON.

No pageant bearings here, nor pompous lay,
No storied urn nor animated bust, etc.

(*See* page 68, Vol. II.)

TO THE HONORABLE THE BAILIES OF THE CANONGATE, EDINBURGH.

GENTLEMEN,—I am sorry to be told that the remains," etc.

See page 254, Vol. II.

We return now to Burns's correspondence. Another of the great eras of Burns's existence had arrived. The Edinburgh edition of his poems had just appeared, and been everywhere received with unbounded admiration and applause. All the whirl and excitement of this period did not cause the poet to lose his head or cause him to forget his earlier friends. His dedication of his new edition to the *Caledonian Hunt* is dated April 7, 1787; on the 15th, ere yet the volume had appeared, we find him writing the following letter to Mrs. Dunlop, who was one of his earliest patrons of rank.

(4) TO MRS. DUNLOP, OF DUNLOP.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

EDINBURGH, 15*th April*, 1787.

MADAM,—There is an affectation of gratitude which I dislike. The periods of Johnson and the pauses of Sterne may hide a selfish heart. For my part, Madam, I trust I have too much pride for servility, and too

little prudence for selfishness. I have this moment broken open your letter, but

> . . . . . "Rude am I in speech,
> And therefore little can I grace the cause,
> In speaking of myself;"

so I shall not trouble you with any fine speeches and hunted figures. I shall just lay my hand on my heart, and say, I hope I shall ever have the truest, the warmest sense of your goodness.

I come abroad in print, for certain, on Wednesday. Your orders I shall punctually attend to; only, by the way, I must tell you that I was paid before for Dr. Moore's and Miss Williams' copies, through the medium of Commissioner Cochrane in this place, but that we can settle when I have the honor of waiting on you.

Dr. Smith* was just gone to London the morning before I received your letter to him. R. B.

17th April 1787.—Memorandum of Agreement betwixt Mr. Creech and Mr. Burns, respecting the property of Mr. Burns's Poems.†

By advice of friends, Mr. Burns having resolved to dispose of the property of his Poems, and having consulted with Mr. Henry M'Kenzie upon the subject, Mr. Creech met with Mr. Burns at Mr. M'Kenzie's house upon Tuesday, the 17th April 1787, in the evening, and they three having retired and conversed upon the subject, Mr. Burns and Mr. Creech referred the sum, to be named by Mr. M'Kenzie, as being well acquainted with matters of this kind, when Mr. M'Kenzie said he thought Mr. Burns should have a hundred guineas for the property of his poems.

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* Author of "The Wealth of Nations."

† A copy of this document was published in the "Burns Calendar," Kilmarnock 1874; we are indebted to Mr. Creech's representatives for a perusal of the original, from which we have corrected a few inaccuracies in that printed copy.

Mr. Creech said that he agreed to the proposal, but as Scotland was now amply supplied with the very numerous edition now printed, he could write to Mr. Caddell of London, to know if he would take a share of the Book, but at any rate Mr. Burns should have the money named by Mr. M'Kenzie, which Mr. Burns most cordially agreed to, and to make over the property upon these terms, whenever Mr. Creech required him.

Upon Monday the 23d of April 1787, Mr. Creech informed Mr. Burns that he had remained in Town expecting Mr. Caddell's answer, for three days, as to his taking a share of the property of the poems; but that he had received no answer; yet he would, as formerly proposed and agreed to, take the whole upon himself, that Mr. Burns might be at no uncertainty in the matter.

Upon this, both parties considered the transaction as finished.

EDINBURGH, *Oct. 23d*, 1787.

"On demand I promise to pay to Mr. Robert Burns, or Order, One Hundred Guineas, value received.

WILLIAM CREECH."

"Received the contents—*May* 30, 1788."

"ROBERT BURNS."

(6) TO JOHN BALLANTINE, ESQ., AYR.

(GILBERT BURNS'S ED., 1820.)

SIR,—I have taken the liberty to send a hundred copies of my book to your care. . . . I trouble you then, Sir, to find a proper person (of the mercantile folks I suppose will be best) that, for a moderate consideration, will retail the books to subscribers, as they are called for. Several of the subscription bills have been mislaid, so all who say they have subscribed must be served at subscription price; otherwise, those who have not subscribed must pay six shillings. Should more copies be needed, an order by post will be immediately answered.

My respectful compliments to Mr. Aiken. I wrote him by David Shaw, which I hope he received.

I have the honor to be, with the most grateful sincerity, Sir, your obliged and very humble servant,

ROBERT BURNS.

EDINBURGH, 18*th April*, 1787.

(2) TO MR. GEORGE REID, BARQUHARIE,*

WITH A PARCEL,

CARE OF W^M^. RONALD, TOBACCONIST, MAUCHLINE.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

MY DEAR SIR,—The fewer words I can tell my story in, so much the better, as I am in an unco tirryfyke of a hurry.

I have sent two copies of my book to you; one of them as a present to yourself, or rather, to your wife, the other present in my name to Miss Jenny. It goes to my heart that time does not allow me to make some very fine turned periods on the occasion, as I generally like pretty well to hear myself speak; at least, fully as well as anybody else.

Tell Miss Jenny that I had wrote her a long letter, wherein I had taken to pieces r^t^. Honorables, Honorables, and Reverends not a few; but it, with many more of my written things were stolen from my room, which terrified me from "scauding my lips in ither folk's kail" again. By good luck, the fellow is gone to Gibraltar, and I trust in heaven he will go to the bottom for his pains. I will write you by post when I leave Auld Reekie, which will be in about ten days.

ROB^T^. BURNS.

EDINBURGH, 19*th April* 1787.

* The name of this gentleman has already been made familiar to the reader at p. 219 *supra*.

John Rodger, Esq., Clydesdale Bank, Greenock is the possessor of the poet's holograph of this letter, and to him the public is indebted for its appearance here. The seal attached to it is an elongated oval shewing at full length a figure, not very well cut, of Orpheus, or perhaps Sappho, with harp in hand. The poet's lodging would, at this date, be the same as that spoken of in the letter to Ballantine of 14th January previous. It appears to be certain that Cromek had seen this letter, although he did not choose to print it. Allan Cunningham quotes from that editor's unpublished memoranda, a very absurd story, evidently suggested by the letter in the text, that the Bard's Edinburgh private Journal "a clasped volume with lock and key" was stolen from his room by a Leith carpenter who was in the habit of calling on Burns, and which carpenter enlisted immediately thereafter in a company of Artificers then being raised to go to Gibraltar. That story is contradicted by the fact that Dr. Currie, in 1800, not only published several extracts from the Journal, but admitted its existence, regretting only that "delicacy and respect due to living characters prevented him from committing the remainder to print."

For the Author's edition, thus ready for delivery on 18th April, there were no fewer than fifteen hundred subscribers, many of whom paid more than the selling price of the volume. The general public demand having speedily exhausted the first impression, the publisher was under the necessity of reprinting the book; and this second impression also failing to supply the extending market, a third reprint bearing date 1787 was produced in London, by arrangement with Mr. Creech. Burns now found himself in possession of a considerable sum of ready money, and the first impulse of his mind was to visit some of the classic scenes of Scottish history and romance. "He had as yet," writes Lockhart, "seen but a small part of his own country, and this by no means among the most interesting of her districts, until indeed his own poetry made it equal, on that score, to any other."

(3) TO DR. JOHN MOORE, LONDON.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

EDINBURGH, 23*d April* 1787.

I RECEIVED the books, and sent the one you mentioned to Mrs. Dunlop. I am ill-skilled in beating

the coverts of imagination for metaphors of gratitude. I thank you, Sir, for the honor you have done me; and to my latest hour will warmly remember it. To be highly pleased with your book is what I have in common with the world; but to regard these volumes as a mark of the author's friendly esteem, is a still more supreme gratification.

I leave Edinburgh in the course of ten days or a fortnight, and, after a few pilgrimages over some of the classic ground of Caledonia *Cowdenknowes*, *Banks, of Yarrow*, *Tweed*, *&c.*, I shall return to my rural shades, in all likelihood never more to quit them. I have formed many intimacies and friendships here, but I am afraid they are all of too tender a construction to bear carriage a hundred and fifty miles. To the rich, the great, the fashionable, the polite, I have no equivalent to offer; and I am afraid my meteor appearance will by no means entitle me to a settled correspondence with any of you, who are the permanent lights of genius and literature.

My most respectful compliments to Miss Williams. If once this tangent flight of mine were over, and I were returned to my wonted leisurely motion in my old circle, I may probably endeavor to return her poetic compliment in kind. ROBT. BURNS.

The answer to this letter, though long, is of such value, in a literary point of view, that we print it here entire. It is especially interesting as showing the necessity for such an edition of the poet's works as this we now offer, which satisfies the writer's desideratum of seeing the number of Burns's admirers extended to all persons of taste who understand English.

LETTER FROM DR. MOORE TO ROBERT BURNS.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

CLIFFORD STREET, May 23, 1787.

DEAR SIR,—I had the pleasure of your letter by Mr. Creech, and soon after he sent me the new edition of your poems.

You seem to think it incumbent on you to send to each subscriber, a number of copies proportionate to his subscription money, but you may depend upon it, few subscribers expect more than one copy, whatever they subscribed; I must inform you, however, that I took twelve copies for those subscribers, for whose money you were so accurate as to send me a receipt, and Lord Eglinton told me he had sent for six copies for himself, as he wished to give five of them in presents.

Some of the poems you have added in this last edition are very beautiful, particularly the "Winter Night," the "Address to Edinburgh," "Green grow the rashes," and the two songs immediately following; the latter of which is exquisite. By the way, I imagine, you have a peculiar talent for such compositions, which you ought to indulge. No kind of poetry demands more delicacy or higher polishing. Horace is more admired on account of his Odes than all his other writings. But nothing now added is equal to your "Vision," and "Cotter's Saturday Night." In these are united fine imagery, natural and pathetic description, with sublimity of language and thought. It is evident that you already possess a great variety of expression and command of the English language, you ought therefore to deal more sparingly, for the future, in the provincial dialect—why should you by using that, limit the number of your admirers to those who understand the Scottish, when you can extend it to all persons of taste who understand the English language? In my opinion you should plan some larger work than any you have as yet attempted. I mean, reflect upon some proper subject and arrange the plan in your mind, without beginning to execute any part of it till you have studied most of the best English poets, and read a little more of history. The Greek and Roman stories you can read in some abridgement, and soon become master of the most brilliant facts, which must highly delight a poetical mind. You should also, and very soon may, become master of the heathen mythology, to which there are everlasting allusions in all the poets, and which in itself is charmingly fanciful. What will require to be studied with more attention, is modern history; that is the history of France and Great Britain, from the beginning of Henry the seventh's reign. I know very well you have a mind capable of attaining knowledge by a shorter process than is commonly used, and I am certain you are capable of making better use of it when attained than is generally done.

I beg you will not give yourself the trouble of writing to me when it is inconvenient, and make no apology when you do write for having postponed it—be assured of this, however, that I shall always be happy to hear from you. I think my friend Mr. ——— told me that you had some poems in manuscript by you, of a satirical and humorous nature (in which by the way I think you very strong) which your prudent friends prevailed on you to omit; particularly one called Somebody's Confession,* if you will entrust me with a sight of any of these, I will pawn my word to give you copies, and will be obliged to you for a perusal of them.

I understand that you intend to take a farm, and make the useful and respectable business of husbandry your chief occupation; this, I hope, will not prevent your making occasional addresses to the nine ladies who have shewn you such favor, one of whom visited you in the "auld clay biggin." Virgil, before you, proved to the world that there is nothing in the business of husbandry inimical to poetry; and I sincerely hope that you may afford an example of a good poet being a successful farmer. I fear it will not be in my power to visit Scotland this season; when I do, I shall endeavor to find you out, for I heartily wish to see and converse with you. If ever your occasions call you to this place, I make no doubt of your paying me a visit, and you may depend on a very cordial welcome from the family,—I am, dear Sir, your friend and obedient servant. J. MOORE.

On the same day that the letter to Dr. Moore was penned, Burns was presented by Dr. James Gregory with an English Translation of Cicero's Select Orations (London, 1756). The Dr. was Professor of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, to which Chair he succeeded in 1773, on the death of his father, Dr. John Gregory, author of "A Father's Legacy to his Daughters." The poet made the following inscription on the book:

EDIN., 23*d April*, 1787.

THIS book, a present from the truly worthy and learned DR. GREGORY, I shall preserve to my latest hour, as a mark of the gratitude, esteem, and veneration I bear the Doner. So help me God! ROBERT BURNS.

* Holy Willie's Prayer, Vol. I, p. 91.

(5) TO MRS. DUNLOP OF DUNLOP.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

* * * * *

Your criticisms, Madam, I understand very well, and could have wished to have pleased you better. You are right in your guess that I am not very amenable to counsel. Poets, much my superiors, have so flattered those who possessed the adventitious qualities of wealth and power, that I am determined to flatter no created being either in prose or verse.

I set as little by kings, lords, clergy, critics, &c., as all these respective gentry do by my bardship. I know what I may expect from the world by and by—illiberal abuse, and perhaps contemptuous neglect.

I am happy, Madam, that some of my own favorite pieces are distinguished by your particular approbation. For my "Dream," which has unfortunately incurred your loyal displeasure, I hope, in four weeks or less, to have the honor of appearing at Dunlop in its defence, in person.

ROBT. BURNS.

EDINBURGH, 30*th April*, 1787.

(1) TO MR. WILLIAM DUNBAR, W.S.

(HOGG AND MOTHERWELL, 1835.)

DEAR SIR,—In Justice to Spenser, I must acknowledge that there is scarcely a poet in the language could have been a more agreeable present to me; and in justice to you, allow me to say, Sir, that I have not met with a man in Edinburgh to whom I would so willingly have been indebted for the gift. The tattered rhymes I herewith present you, and the handsome volumes of Spenser for which I am so much indebted to your goodness, may perhaps be not in

proportion to one another; but be that as it may, my gift, though far less valuable, is as sincere a mark of esteem as yours.

The time is approaching when I shall return to my shades; and I am afraid my numerous Edinburgh friendships are of so tender a construction, that they will not bear carriage with me. Yours is one of the few that I could wish of a more robust constitution. It is indeed very probable that when I leave this city, we part never more to meet in this sublunary sphere; but I have a strong fancy that in some future eccentric planet, the comet of happier systems than any with which astronomy is yet acquainted, you and I, among the harum-scarum sons of imagination and whim, with a hearty shake of a hand, a metaphor, and a laugh, shall recognise old acquaintances:

> "Where Wit may sparkle all its rays,
> Uncurst with Caution's fears;
> And Pleasure, basking in the blaze,
> Rejoice for endless years."

I have the honor to be, with the warmest sincerity,
Dear Sir, yours ever, ROBT. BURNS.

LAWNMARKET, *Monday Morning.*
[*April 30th*, 1787.]

On Tuesday 1st and Wednesday 2nd May, Burns was absent from Edinburgh on a private visit to the little circle of friends who had entertained him so heartily at Covington near Biggar, on his journey to Edinburgh in November previous. This fact was communicated to Mr. Robert Chambers by a descendant of the farmer at Covington Mains, Mr. Archibald Prentice, already noticed. It appears that the careful husbandman had made an entry of that visit in his private journal, among his agricultural notes.

Who may venture to guess what errand the bard went upon? It is enough that in an off-hand, but very natural song, he

has described that locality most minutely, and recorded a sufficient motive for revisiting it.

> "Not Gowrie's rich valley, nor Forth's sunny shores,
> To me hae the charms o' yon wild mossy moors;
> For there, by a lonely sequestered stream,
> Resides a sweet lassie, my thought and my dream:
> She is not the fairest, altho' she is fair,
> O' nice education but sma' is her share,
> Her parentage humble as humble can be,
> But I loe the dear lassie because she loes me."
>
> *See* p. 54, *supra*.

(1) TO THE REV. DR. HUGH BLAIR.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

LAWNMARKET, *Edinburgh*, 3*d May*, 1787.

REV. AND MUCH RESPECTED SIR,—I leave Edinburgh to-morrow morning, but could not go without troubling you with half a line, sincerely to thank you for the kindness, patronage, and friendship, you have shewn me. I often felt the embarrassment of my singular situation; drawn forth from the veriest shades of life to the glare of remark; and honored by the notice of those illustrious names of my country, whose works, while they are applauded to the end of time, will ever instruct and mend the heart. However, the meteor-like novelty of my appearance in the world might attract notice, and honor me with the acquaintance of the permanent lights of genius and literature, those who are truly benefactors of the immortal nature of man; I knew very well, that my utmost merit was far unequal to the task of preserving that character, when once the novelty was over: I have made up my mind that abuse, or almost even neglect, will not surprize me in my quarters.

I have sent you a proof impression of Beugo's work for me, done on India paper, as a trifling but sincere testimony with what heart-warm gratitude I am, &c.

On Friday 4th May, the poet sent to his venerated friend, Mr. William Tytler of Woodhouselee, a similar proof impres-

sion of his engraved portrait, accompanied by the well-known poetical address to that gentleman, beginning—

"Reveréd defender of beauteous Stuart."

See page 89, *supra*.

At the close of the poem he added as follows:—

My Muse jilted me here, and turned a corner on me, and I have not got again into her good graces.

Do me the justice to believe me sincere in my grateful remembrance of the many civilities you have honored me with since I came to Edinburgh, and in assuring you that I have the honor to be, revered Sir, your obliged and very humble servant

ROBERT BURNS.

LAWNMARKET, *Friday, noon.*

(1) TO MR. JAMES JOHNSON, MUSIC ENGRAVER, EDINBURGH.

(HOGG AND MOTHERWELL, 1835.)

DEAR SIR,—I have sent you a song never before known, for your collection; the air by Mr. M'Gibbon, but I know not the author of the words, which I got from Dr. Blacklock.

Farewell, my dear Sir! I wished to have seen you, but I have been dreadfully throng, as I march tomorrow.

Had my acquaintance with you been a little older, I would have asked the favor of your correspondence; as I have met with few people whose company and conversation gave me so much pleasure, because I have met with few whose sentiments are so congenial to my own.

When Dunbar and you meet, tell him I left Edinburgh with the idea of him hanging somewhere about my heart.

Keep the original of this song till we meet again, whenever that may be. R. B.

LAWNMARKET, *4th May*, 1787.

(2) TO THE EARL OF GLENCAIRN.

(DR. WADDELL'S EDITION, 1869.)

MY LORD,—I go away to-morrow morning early, and allow me to vent the fulness of my heart in thanking your Lordship for all that patronage, that benevolence and that friendship with which you have honored me. With brimful eyes, I pray that you may find, in that great Being whose image you so nobly bear, that Friend which I have found in you. My gratitude is not selfish design—that I disdain; it is not dodging after the heel of greatness—that is an offering you disdain. It is a feeling of the same kind with my devotion.

R. B.

LAWNMARKET, *Friday, noon.*

THE BORDER TOUR.

Our poet, in the course of his first winter in Edinburgh, had formed an intimate acquaintance with Robert Ainslie, the son of a substantial farmer at Berrywell, near Dunse, in Berwickshire. This young man, then only in his twenty-first year, had been serving his apprenticeship with a Writer to the Signet, in Edinburgh, and his name appears on the list of subscribers for two copies of the author's new edition. Burns having now resolved to enjoy an excursion of considerable scope through the south and south-eastern counties of Scotland, on his return journey to Ayrshire, left the city on Saturday 5th May. It had been arranged that Mr. Ainslie should be his fellow-traveller through the earlier stages of the circuit, and accordingly they proceeded on horseback by way of Haddington and Gifford, crossing the Lammermuirs, and reaching Berrywell in the evening. Burns had purchased at Edinburgh for the occasion, a spirited mare which he had christened "Jenny Geddes," after the heroine of orthodoxy who fired the first shot in the Scotch ecclesiastical warfare of 1637. The reader as he progresses will find the poet from time to time making honorable mention of this mare both in verse and prose. The Journal which follows, only partially given by Currie, was first published entire by Cunningham.

LEFT Edinburgh [*May* 5, 1787]—Lammermuir Hills miserably dreary, but at times very picturesque. Langtonedge, a glorious view of the Merse—Reach Berrywell. Old Mr. Ainslie an uncommon character; his hobbies, agriculture, natural philosophy, and politics. In the first, he is unexceptionably the clearest-headed, best-informed man I ever met with; in the other two, very intelligent: as a man of business he has uncommon merit, and by fairly deserving it, has made a very decent independence.* Mrs. Ainslie, an excellent, sensible, cheerful, amiable old woman. Miss Ainslie—her person a little *embonpoint*, but handsome; her face, particularly her eyes, full of sweetness and good humor; she unites three qualities rarely to be found together; keen, solid, penetration; sly, witty observation and remark; and the gentlest, most unaffected female modesty. Douglas, a clever, fine, promising young fellow.—The family-meeting with their brother, my *compagnon de voyage*, very charming; particularly the sister. The whole family remarkably attached to their menials—Mrs. A. full of stories of the sagacity and sense of the little girl in the kitchen. Mr. A. high in the praises of an African, his house-servant—all his people old in his service—Douglas's old nurse came to Berrywell yesterday, to remind them of its being his birthday.†

A Mr. Dudgeon, a poet at times, a worthy remarkable character, natural penetration—a great deal of information, some genius, and extreme modesty.‡

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* We have just been shewn a copy of the "Letters of Junius," in one vol. (London 1783), bearing the signature of Burns on its title page, thus:—"Robt. Burns, Poet." On the fly-leaf is the following presentation inscription in the handwriting of old Mr. Ainslie:—"In Testimony of the most sincere Friendship and Esteem, this book is presented to Mr. Robert Burns by

BERRYWELL, 18*th May* 1787. ROBERT AINSLIE."

† "Died at Eden, near Banff, Aberdeenshire, 19th September 1850, Douglas Ainslie, Esq. of Cairnbank, Berwickshire, in the 80th year of his age."—*Newspaper Obituary.*

‡ Author of Scottish song "Up amang yon cliffy rocks," of which popular lyric he is said to have also composed the pretty melody. He died at Newmains, Whitekirk, 23rd October, 1795.

Sunday 6th,—Went to church at Dunse*—Dr. Bowmaker a man of strong lungs and pretty judicious remark; but ill-skilled in propriety, and altogether unconscious of his want of it.

Monday [*7th.*]—Coldstream—went over to England†—Cornhill—glorious river Tweed—clear and majestic—fine bridge. Dine at Coldstream with Mr. Ainslie and Mr. Foreman—beat Mr. F. in a dispute about Voltaire. Tea at Lennel House with Mr. Brydone‡—Mr. Brydone a most excellent heart, kind, joyous, and benevolent; but a good deal of the French indiscriminate complaisance—from his situation past and present, an admirer of every thing that bears a splendid title, or that possesses a large estate—Mrs. Brydone a most elegant woman in her person and manners; the tones of her voice remarkably sweet—my reception extremely flattering—sleep at Coldstream.

Tuesday [*8th*]—Breakfast at Kelso—charming situation of Kelso—fine bridge over the Tweed—enchanting views and prospects on both sides of the river, particularly the Scotch side; introduced to Mr. Scott of the

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* See Epigram then produced, page 91, *supra*.

† "When we arrived at Coldstream, where the dividing line between Scotland and England is the Tweed, I suggested our going across to the other side by the Coldstream bridge, that Burns might have it to say he *had been in England*. We did so, and were pacing slowly along on English ground, enjoying our walk, when I was astonished to see the poet throw away his hat, and, thus uncovered, look towards Scotland kneeling and with uplifted hands, in an attitude of reverence. I kept silence, while he with extreme emotion and an expression of countenance which I will never forget, prayed for, and blessed his native land most solemnly, by repeating with fine emphasis the two closing stanzas of his *Cottar's Saturday Night*.

'O Scotia! my dear, my native soil,
For whom my warmest wish to heaven is sent! &c."

Letter of Robert Ainslie to James Hogg, April 20th, 1834.

‡ Burns in "The Vision," referring to Col. Fullarton, calls him "Brydone's brave ward," because he had travelled under the care of the distinguished gentleman now visited by the poet. Patrick Brydone, Esq., was well-known as author of a "Tour in Sicily and Malta;" Mrs. Brydone was a daughter of Dr. Robertson, the historian; and Miss Brydone, their daughter, a woman of great accomplishments, became Countess of Minto.

Royal Bank—an excellent, modest fellow—fine situation of it—ruins of Roxburgh Castle—a holly-bush growing where James II. of Scotland was accidentally killed by the bursting of a cannon. A small old religious ruin, and a fine old garden planted by the religious, rooted out and destroyed by an English Hottentot, a *maître d'hotel* of the Duke's, a Mr. Cole. Climate and soil of Berwickshire, and even Roxburghshire, superior to Ayrshire — bad roads. Turnip and sheep husbandry, their great improvements — Mr. M'Dowal, at Caverton Mill, a friend of Mr. Ainslie's, with whom I dined to-day, sold his sheep, ewe and lamb together, at two guineas a piece.—Wash their sheep before shearing—seven or eight pounds of washen wool in a fleece—low markets, consequently low rents —fine lands not above sixteen shillings a Scotch acre —magnificence of farmers and farm-houses—come up Teviot and up Jed to Jedburgh to lie, and so wish myself a good night.

Wednesday [*9th.*]—Breakfast with Mr. ——, in Jedburgh—a squabble between Mrs. ——, a crazed, talkative slattern, and a sister of her's, an old maid, respecting a Relief minister. Miss gives Madam the lie; and Madam, by way of revenge, upbraids her that she laid snares to entangle the said minister, then a widower, in the net of matrimony. Go about two miles out of Jedburgh to a roup of parks — meet a polite, soldier-like gentleman, a Captain Rutherford, who had been many years through the wilds of America, a prisoner among the Indians. Charming, romantic situation of Jedburgh, with gardens, orchards, &c., intermingled among the houses—fine old ruins—a once magnificent cathedral, and strong castle. All the towns here have the appearance of old, rude grandeur, but the people extremely idle — Jed a fine romantic little river.

Dine with Captain Rutherford—the Captain a polite fellow, fond of money in his farming way; showed a particular respect to my bardship—his lady exactly a proper matrimonial second part for him. Miss Rutherford a beautiful girl, but too far gone woman to expose so much of a fine swelling bosom—her face very fine.

Return to Jedburgh—walk up Jed with some ladies to be shown Love-lane and Blackburn, two fairy scenes. Introduced to Mr. Potts, writer, a very clever fellow; and Mr. Somerville, the clergyman of the place, a man, and a gentleman, but sadly addicted to punning*—The walking-party of ladies, Mrs. —— and Miss ——, her sister, before mentioned.—*N. B.*—These two appear still more comfortably ugly and stupid, and bore me most shockingly. Two Miss ——, tolerably agreeable. Miss Hope, a tolerably pretty girl, fond of laughing and fun. Miss Lindsay, a good-humored, amiable girl: rather short *et embonpoint*, but handsome, and extremely graceful—beautiful hazel eyes, full of spirit, and sparkling with delicious moisture—an engaging face *un tout ensemble* that speaks her of the first order of female minds—her sister, a bonie, strappin, rosy, sonsie lass. Shake myself loose, after several unsuccessful efforts, of Mrs. and Miss ——, and somehow or other, get hold of Miss Lindsay's arm. My heart is thawed into melting pleasure after being so long frozen up in the Greenland bay of indifference, amid the noise and nonsense of Edinburgh. Miss seems very well pleased with my bardship's distinguishing her; and after some slight qualms, which I could easily mark, she sets the titter round at defiance, and kindly allows me to keep my hold: and when parted by the ceremony of my introduction to Mr.

* Dr. Somerville was distinguished as a literary man. It is said that after the appearance of this passage in Currie's life of the Poet, he entirely abandoned the habit of punning. He died in May 1830, aged ninety years, sixty-four of which had been passed in the clerical profession. His son married a lady distinguished in the scientific world; viz., the well-known Mrs. Mary Somerville.

Somerville, she met me half, to resume my situation. *Nota Bene*—The poet within a point and a half of being d-mnably in love—I am afraid my bosom is still nearly as much tinder as ever.

The old, cross-grained, whiggish, ugly, slanderous Miss ——, with all the poisonous spleen of a disappointed, ancient maid, stops me very unseasonably to ease her bursting breast, by falling abusively foul on the Miss Lindsays, particularly on my Dulcinea;—I hardly refrain from cursing her to her face for daring to mouth her calumnious slander on one of the finest pieces of the workmanship of Almighty Excellence! Sup at Mr. ——'s; vexed that the Miss Lindsays are not of the supper-party, as they only are wanting. Mrs. —— and Miss —— still improve infernally on my hands.

Set out next morning [10*th.*]—for Wauchope, the seat of my correspondent, Mrs. Scott—breakfast by the way with Dr. Elliot, an agreeable, good-hearted, climate-beaten old veteran, in the medical line; now retired to a romantic, but rather moorish place, on the banks of the Roole—he accompanies us almost to Wauchope—we traverse the country to the top of Bochester, the scene of an old encampment, and Woolee Hill.

Wauchope.—Mr. Scott exactly the figure and face commonly given to Sancho Panza—very shrewd in his farming matters, and not unfrequently stumbles on what may be called a strong thing rather than a good thing. Mrs. Scott all the sense, taste, intrepidity of face, and bold, critical decision, which usually distinguish female authors.* Sup with Mr. Potts—agreeable party. Breakfast next morning [11*th*] with

* It was this lady who sent him a rhyming epistle in February preceding, which elicited the beautiful poetic reply printed at page 70, *supra*. She died in February, 1789.

Mr. Somerville—the *bruit* of Miss Lindsay and my bardship, by means of the invention and malice of Miss —. Mr. Somerville sends to Dr. Lindsay, begging him and family to breakfast if convenient, but at all events to send Miss Lindsay; accordingly, Miss Lindsay only comes,—I find Miss Lindsay would soon play the devil with me—I met with some little flattering attentions from her. Mrs. Somerville an excellent, motherly, agreeable woman, and a fine family. Mr. Ainslie and Mrs. S—, junr., with Mr. —, Miss Lindsay, and myself, go to see *Esther*, a very remarkable woman for reciting poetry of all kinds, and sometimes making Scotch doggerel herself—she can repeat by heart almost everything she has ever read, particularly Pope's *Homer* from end to end—has studied *Euclid* by herself, and, in short, is a woman of very extraordinary abilities.—On conversing with her I find her fully equal to the character given of her. She is very much flattered that I send for her, and that she sees a poet who has *put out a book*, as she says.—She is, among other things, a great florist, and is rather past the meridian of once celebrated beauty.*

I walk in *Esther's* garden with Miss Lindsay, and after some little chit-chat of the tender kind, I presented her with a proof print of my *nob*, which she accepted with something more tender than gratitude. She told me many little stories which Miss —— had retailed concerning her and me, with prolonging pleasure—God bless her! Was waited on by the Magistrates, and presented with the freedom of the burgh.

Took farewell of Jedburgh, with some melancholy, disagreeable sensations.—Jed, pure be thy crystal streams, and hallowed thy sylvan banks! Sweet Isabella Lindsay, may peace dwell in thy bosom, unin-

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* Esther Easton, a woman of extraordinary gifts, was the wife of a common working gardener. She subsequently taught a school, and was ultimately dependent on charity.

terrupted, except by the tumultuous throbbings of rapturous love! That love-kindling eye must beam on another, not on me—that graceful form must bless another's arms, not mine! *

Kelso.—Dine with the Farmer's Club—all gentlemen, talking of high matters—each of them keeps a hunter from thirty to fifty pounds value, and attends the fox-huntings in the county—go out with Mr. Ker, one of the club, and a friend of Mr. Ainslie's to lie. [12th]—Mr. Ker a most gentlemanly, clever, handsome fellow, a widower with some fine children—his mind and manners astonishingly like my dear old friend Robert Muir, in Kilmarnock—everything in Mr. Ker's most elegant—he offers to accompany me in my English tour. Dine with Sir Alexander Don—a pretty clever fellow, but far from being a match for his divine lady.†

A very wet day . . .—Sleep at Stodrig again; and [Sunday 13th] set out for Melrose—visit Dryburgh, a fine old ruined abbey—still bad weather—cross Leader, and come up Tweed to Melrose—dine there, and visit that far-famed, glorious ruin—come to Selkirk, up Ettrick;‡—the whole country hereabout, both on Tweed and Ettrick, remarkably stony.

Monday [14*th*].—Come to Inverleithen, a famous Spa, and in the vicinity of the palace of Traquhair, where having dined, and drank some Galloway-whey, I here remain till to-morrow—saw "Elibanks and Elibraes," on the other side of the Tweed.§

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* Isabella Lindsay, sister of Dr. Lindsay, we learn from Mr. Chambers, married afterwards a Mr. Adam Armstrong, an employé of the Russian government. "She died young, leaving four children: the youngest is General Robert Armstrong, now [1856] Director of the Imperial Mint at St. Petersburg. Peggy, the younger sister, died not long after the poet's visit, at the age of twenty-two."

† Lady Harriet Don, sister to the Earl of Glencairn.

‡ Here Burns penned his famous Lament for Mr. Creech's absence from Edinburgh,—"Willie's Awa."

§ An old free-spoken song which celebrates this locality would be enough in itself to bring the poet twenty miles out of his road to see it.

Tuesday, [15*th*].—Drank tea yesternight at Pirn, with Mr. Horsburgh.—Breakfasted to-day with Mr. Ballantine of Hollylee.—Proposal for a four-horse team to consist of Mr. Scott of Wauchope, Fittieland: Logan of Logan, Fittiefur: Ballantine of Hollylee, Forewynd: Horsburgh of Horsburgh. Dine at a country inn, kept by a miller in Earlston,* the birth-place and residence of the celebrated Thomas the Rhymer—saw the ruins of his castle—come to Berrywell.

Wednesday, [16*th*].—Dine at Dunse with the Farmers' Club—company, impossible to do them justice—Rev. Mr. Smith, a famous punster, and Mr. Meikle a celebrated mechanic, and inventor of the threshing-mill.—*Thursday*, [17th], breakfast at Berrywell,† and walk into Dunse to see a famous knife made by a cutler there, and to be presented to an Italian prince.—A pleasant ride with my friend Mr. Robert Ainslie and his sister, to Mr. Thomson's, a man who has newly commenced farmer, and has married a Miss Patty Grieve, formerly a flame of Mr. Robert Ainslie's. Company—Miss Jacky Grieve, an amiable sister of Mrs. Thomson's, and Mr. Hood, an honest, worthy, facetious farmer, in the neighborhood.

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* Undoubtedly Burns's reason for making this detour was to see the song-celebrated Cowdenknowes.

† A young man named Symon Gray, the son of a respected citizen of Dunse, who was in the practice of stringing rhymes together which he fancied were meritorious, sent packet after packet of his trash to Berrywell, to elicit Burns's opinion of them. The poet good-humoredly scribbled his judgment of their value by imitating Symon's own style thus:—

"Dear Symon Gray,
The other day,
When you sent me some rhyme,
I could not then
Just ascertain
Its worth, for want of time;
But now, to-day,
Good Master Gray,
I've read it o'er and o'er,
Tried all my skill,
But find I'm still
Just where I was before.
We auld wives' minions
Give our opinions,
Solicited or no;
Then of its fau'ts
My honest thoughts
I'll give, and here they go:—"

Chambers assures us that so rough is the expression of Burns's opinion which follows this introduction, it is not presentable before good company.

Friday [18*th*].—Ride to Berwick—an idle town, rudely picturesque.—Meet Lord Errol in walking round the walls—his lordship's flattering notice of me.—Dine with Mr. Clunyie, merchant—nothing particular in company or conversation.—Come up a bold shore, and over a wild country to Eyemouth—sup and sleep at Mr. Grieve's.

Saturday [19*th*].—Spend the day at Mr. Grieve's—made a Royal-arch mason of St. Abb's Lodge.*—Mr. William Grieve, the eldest brother, a joyous, warm-hearted, jolly, clever fellow—takes a hearty glass, and sings a good song. Mr. Robert, his brother, and partner in trade, a good fellow, but says little. Take a sail after dinner. Fishing of all kinds pays tithes at Eyemouth.

Sunday [20*th*].—A Mr. Robinson, brewer at Ednam, sets out with us to Dunbar.

The Miss Grieves very good girls.—My bardship's heart got a brush from Miss Betsey.

Mr. William Grieve's attachment to the family circle so fond, that when he is out, which by the bye is often the case, he cannot go to bed till he sees if all his sisters are sleeping well :—Pass the famous Abbey of Coldingham, and Pease-bridge.—Call at Mr. Shireff's, where Mr. A. and I dine.—Mr. S. talkative and conceited. I talk of love to Nancy the whole evening, while her brother escorts home some com-

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* We quote the following entry from Cunningham's edition :—

"EYEMOUTH, 19*th May*, 1787.

"AT a general encampment held this day, the following brethren were made Royal-arch Masons—namely, Robert Burns, from the Lodge of St. James's, Tarbolton, Ayrshire, and Robert Ainslie, from the Lodge of St. Luke's, Edinburgh, by James Carmichael, Wm. Grieve, Daniel Dow, John Clay, Robert Grieve, &c., &c. Robert Ainslie paid one guinea admission dues ; but on account of R. Burns's remarkable poetical genius, the encampment unanimously agreed to admit him gratis, and consider themselves honoured by having a man of such shining abilities for one of their companions.

"Extracted from the Minute Book of the Lodge by THOS. BOWHILL."

panions like himself. — Sir James Hall of Dunglass,* having heard of my being in the neighborhood, comes to Mr. Shireff's to breakfast — [21st] takes me to see his fine scenery on the stream of Dunglass—Dunglass the most romantic, sweet place I ever saw—Sir James and his lady a pleasant happy couple. He points out a walk for which he has an uncommon respect, as it was made by an aunt of his, to whom he owes much.

Miss —— will accompany me to Dunbar, by way of making a parade of me as a sweetheart of hers, among her relations. She mounts an old cart horse, as huge and as lean as a house; a rusty old side-saddle without girth or stirrup, but fastened on with an old pillion-girth — herself as fine as hands could make her, in cream-colored riding-clothes, hat and feather, &c. — I, ashamed of my situation, ride like the devil, and almost shake her to pieces on old Jolly —get rid of her by refusing to call at her uncle's with her.

Past through the most glorious corn-country I ever saw, till I reach Dunbar, a neat little town.—Dine with Provost Fall, an eminent merchant, and most respectable character, but undescribable, as he exhibits no marked traits. Mrs. Fall, a genius in painting; fully more clever in the fine arts and sciences than my friend Lady Wauchope, without her consummate assurance of her own abilities.—Call with Mr. Robinson (whom, by the bye, I find to be a worthy, much respected man, very modest; warm, social heart, which with less good sense than his would be perhaps with the children of prim precision and pride, rather inimical to that respect which is man's due from man)—with him I call on Miss Clarke, a maiden in the Scotch phrase, "*Guid enough, but no brent new:*" a

* He was the father of Captain Basil Hall, so well known by his many popular works.

clever woman, with tolerable pretensions to remark and wit; while time had blown the blushing bud of bashful modesty into the flower of easy confidence. She wanted to see what sort of *raree show* an author was; and to let him know, that though Dunbar was but a little town, yet it was not destitute of people of parts.

Breakfast next morning [22nd] at Skateraw, at Mr. Lee's, a farmer of great note.—Mr. Lee, an excellent, hospitable, social fellow, rather oldish—warm-hearted and chatty—a most judicious, sensible farmer. Mr. Lee detains me till next morning—Company at dinner—my rev. acquaintance Dr. Bowmaker, a reverend, rattling old fellow; two sea lieutenants; a cousin of the landlord's, a fellow whose looks are of that kind which deceived me in a gentleman at Kelso, and has often deceived me—a goodly handsome figure and face, which incline one to give them credit for parts which they have not; Mr. Clarke, a much cleverer fellow, but whose looks a little cloudy, and his appearance rather ungainly, with an every-day observer may prejudice the opinion against him; Dr. Brown, a medical young gentleman from Dunbar, a fellow whose face and manners are open and engaging.—Leave Skateraw for Dunse next day [23], along with Collector ——, a lad of slender abilities and bashfully diffident to an extreme.

Found Miss Ainslie, the amiable, the sensible, the good-humored, the sweet Miss Ainslie, all alone at Berrywell.—Heavenly powers who know the weakness of human hearts, support mine! What happiness must I see only to remind me that I cannot enjoy it!

Lammermuir Hills, from East Lothian to Dunse very wild.—Dine with the Farmers' Club at Kelso. Sir John Hume and Mr. Lumsden there, but nothing worth remembrance when the following circumstance is considered—I walk into Dunse before dinner, and

out to Berrywell in the evening with Miss Ainslie—how well-bred, how frank, how good she is! Charming Rachel! may thy bosom never be wrung by the evils of this life of sorrows, or by the villainy of this world's sons!*

Thursday [24*th*].—Mr. Ker and I set out to dine at Mr. Hood's on our way to England.

I am taken extremely ill with strong feverish symptoms, and take a servant of Mr. Hood's to watch me all night—embittering remorse scares my fancy at the gloomy forebodings of death.—I am determined to live for the future in such a manner as not to be scared at the approach of Death—I am sure I could meet him with indifference, but for "the something beyond the grave."—Mr. Hood agrees to accompany us to England if we will wait till Sunday.

Friday [25*th*].—I go with Mr. Hood to see a roup of an unfortunate farmer's stock—rigid economy, and decent industry, do you preserve me from being the principal *dramatis persona* in such a scene of horror.

Meet my good old friend Mr. Ainslie, who calls on Mr. Hood in the evening to take farewell of my bardship. This day I feel myself warm with sentiments of gratitude to the Great Preserver of men, who has kindly restored me to health and strength once more.

A pleasant walk with my young friend Douglas Ainslie, a sweet, modest, clever young fellow.

Sunday, 27*th May*.—Cross Tweed, and traverse the moors through a wild country till I reach Alnwick—Alnwick Castle a seat of the Duke of Northumberland, furnished in a most princely manner.—A Mr.

* [Miss Ainslie died unmarried—a good-looking, elderly lady, of very agreeable manners.—*Chambers*.]

Wilkin, agent of His Grace's, shows us the house and policies. Mr. Wilkin, a discreet, sensible, ingenious man.

Monday [28*th*].—Come, still through by-ways, to Warkworth, where we dine.—Hermitage and old castle. Warkworth situated very picturesque, with Coquet Island, a small rocky spot, the seat of an old monastery, facing it a little in the sea; and the small but romantic river Coquet, running through it.—Sleep at Morpeth, a pleasant enough little town, and on next day [29], to Newcastle.—Meet with a very agreeable, sensible fellow, a Mr. Chattox, who shows us a great many civilities, and who dines and sups with us.

Wednesday [30*th*].—Left Newcastle early in the morning, and rode over a fine country to Hexham to breakfast—from Hexham to Wardrue, the celebrated Spa, where we slept.

Thursday [31*st*].—Reach Longtown to dine, and part there with my good friends Messrs. Hood and Ker—A hiring day in Longtown—I am uncommonly happy to see so many young folks enjoying life.—I come to Carlisle. (Meet a strange enough romantic adventure by the way, in falling in with a girl and her married sister—the girl, after some overtures of gallantry on my side, sees me a little cut with the bottle, and offers to take me in for a Gretna-green affair. I not being such a gull as she imagines, make an appointment with her, by way of *vive la bagatelle*, to hold a conference on it when we reach Town.—I meet her in town and give her a brush of caressing, and a bottle of cyder, but finding herself *un peu trompée* in her man she sheers off.) Next day [1st June,] I meet my good friend, Mr. Mitchell, and walk with him round the town and its environs,

and through his printing works, &c.—four or five hundred people employed, many of them women and children. Dine with Mr. Mitchell, and leave Carlisle. Come by the coast to Annan. Overtaken on the way by a curious old fish of a shoemaker and miner from Cumberland mines.

[*Here the Manuscript abruptly terminates. The Journal includes a period of twenty-six days.*]

In connexion with the foregoing Journal, we must not omit the following items of correspondence :—

(1) TO WILLIAM CREECH, ESQ., LONDON.

ENCLOSING POEM, "WILLIE'S AWA." (page 92, *supra.*)

(CROMEK, 1808.)

SELKIRK, 13*th May* 1787.

MY HONORED FRIEND,—The enclosed I have just wrote, nearly extempore, in a solitary Inn in Selkirk, after a miserable, wet day's riding. I have been over most of East Lothian, Berwick, Roxburgh, and Selkirk shires, and next week I begin a tour through the north of England. Yesterday, I dined with Lady Harriot, sister to my noble Patron—*Quem Deus conservet!*—I would write till I would tire you as much with dull prose, as I dare say by this time you are with wretched verse ; but I am jaded to death ; so, with a grateful farewell, I have the honor to be, good Sir, yours sincerely, B.

(1) TO MR. PETER HILL,

CARE OF MR. CREECH, BOOKSELLER, EDINBURGH.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.*)

D^R. SIR,—If Mr. Alex^r. Pattison, or Mr. Cowan, from Paisley, or in general, any other of those to whom I have sent copies on credit before, apply to you, you will give them what number they demand, when they require it, provided always that those who are non-subscribers shall pay one shilling more than subscribers. This I write to you when I am miserably fou, consequently it must be the sentiments of my heart. ROBERT BURNS.

May 17th 1787.

(1) TO MR. PATTISON, *BOOKSELLER*, PAISLEY.†

(HOGG AND MOTHERWELL, 1835.)

BERRYWELL, *near* DUNSE, *May 17th*, 1787.

DEAR SIR,—I am sorry I was out of Edinburgh, making a slight pilgrimage to the classic scenes of this country, when I was favored with yours of the 11th instant, enclosing an order of the Paisley Banking Company on the Royal Bank, for Twenty-two pounds, seven shillings sterling, payment in full, after carriage deducted, for ninety copies of my book I

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* The original of this note is in the Poet's monument at Edinburgh: the upper portion of the address is torn off, but it is clear from the next letter that this was addressed to Mr. Hill.

† Chambers informs us that this individual was not a "bookseller," but a manufacturer, and suggests that the bard's addressing him as such, was a playful allusion to his friendly activity in disposing of copies of the book. The number of copies subscribed for in Paisley was eighty-four. A careful list of the subscribers, with biographical notes, was published in 1871 by Mr. David Semple, F.S.A., Paisley. Among these we find Alex. Wilson, the poet and ornithologist, who took two copies. Another of the subscribers was John Wilson, merchant, father of Professor John Wilson of Edinburgh.

sent you. According to your motions, I see you will have left Scotland before this reaches you, otherwise I would send you "Holy Willie" with all my heart. I was so hurried that I absolutely forgot several things I ought to have minded, among the rest, sending books to Mr. Cowan, but any order of yours will be answered at Creech's shop. You will please remember that non-subscribers, pay six shillings, this is Creech's profit; but those who have subscribed, though their names have been neglected in the printed list, which is very incorrect, are supplied at the subscription-price. I was not at Glasgow, nor do I intend for London; and I think Mrs. Fame is very idle to tell so many lies on a poor poet. When you or Mr. Cowan write for copies, if you should want any, direct to Mr. Hill, at Mr. Creech's shop, and I write to Mr. Hill by this post, to answer either of your orders. Hill is Mr. Creech's first clerk, and Creech himself is presently in London. I suppose I shall have the pleasure, against your return to Paisley, of assuring you how much I am, dear Sir, your obliged humble servant, R. B.

(1) TO MR. WILLIAM NICOL.

CLASSICAL MASTER, HIGH SCHOOL, EDINBURGH.*

(CROMEK, 1808.)

CARLISLE, *June* 1*st*, 1787,
(*or, I believe, the* 31*st o' May, rather.*)

KIND, HONEST-HEARTED WILLIE,—I'm sitten down here, after seven and forty miles ridin, e'en as for-

* "Nicol," writes Lockhart, "was a man of quick parts and considerable learning, who had risen from a rank as humble as Burns's: from the beginning an enthusiastic admirer, and, ere long, a constant associate of the poet, and a most dangerous associate; for, with a warm heart, the man united a fierce irascible temper, a scorn of many of the decencies of life, a noisy contempt of Religion, at least of the Religious institutions of his country, and a violent pro-

jesket and forniaiw'd as a forfough'en cock, to gie you some notion o' my land-lowper-like stravaguin sen the sorrowful hour that I sheuk hands and parted wi' *Auld Reekie.*

My auld, ga'd gleyde o' a meere has huchyall'd up hill and down brae, in Scotland and England, as teugh and birnie as a vera devil wi' me. It's true, she's as poor's a sangmaker and as hard's a kirk, and tipper-taipers when she taks the gate, first like a lady's gentlewoman in a minuwae, or a hen on a het girdle, but she's a yauld, poutherrie Girran for a' that, and has a stomack like Willie Stalker's meere that wad hae disgeested tumbler-wheels, for she'll whip me aff her five stimparts o' the best aits at a down-sittin and ne'er fash her thumb. When ance her ringbanes and spavies, her cruicks and cramps, are fairly soupl'd, she beets to, beets to, and ay the hindmost hour the tightest. I could wager her price to a thretty pennies, that, for twa or three wooks ridin at fifty mile a day, the deil-sticket a five galloppers acqueesh Clyde and Whithorn could cast saut on her tail.

I hae dander'd owre a' the kintra frae Dunbar to Selcraig, and hae forgather'd wi' mony a guid fallow and monie a weelfar'd hizzie. I met wi' twa dink quines in particular, ane o' them a sonsie, fine fodgel lass, baith braw and bonie; the tither was a clean-shankit, straught, tight, weelfar'd winch, as blythe's a lintwhite on a flowerie thorn, and as sweet and modest's a new blawn plumrose in a hazle shaw. They were baith bred to mainers by the beuk, and onie ane o' them had as muckle smeddum and rumblgumtion

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pensity for the bottle. He was one of those who would fain believe themselves to be men of genius; and that genius is a sufficient apology for trampling under foot all the old vulgar rules of prudence and sobriety—being on both points equally mistaken. Of Nicol's letters to Burns, and about him, I have seen many that have never been, and probably that never will be, printed—cumbrous and pedantic effusions, exhibiting nothing that one can imagine to have been pleasing to the poet, except what was enough to redeem all imperfections—namely, a rapturous admiration of Burns's genius."

as the half o' some presbytries that you and I baith ken. They play'd me sik a deevil o' a shavie that I daur say if my harigals were turn'd out, ye wad see twa nicks i' the heart o' me like the mark o' a kail-whittle in a castock.

I was gaun to write you a lang pystle, but, Gude forgie me! I gat mysel sae notouriously bitchify'd the day, after kail-time, that I can hardly stoiter but and ben.

My best respecks to the guidwife and a' our common friens, especiall Mr. and Mrs. Cruikshank and the honest guidman o' Jock's Lodge.*

I'll be in Dumfries the morn gif the beast be to the fore, and the branks bide hale. Gude be wi' you, Willie! Amen!—

Currie has remarked concerning the Border excursion, "That on the banks of the Tweed and the Teviot, our bard should find nymphs that were beautiful is what might be confidently presumed. Two of these are particularly described in his Journal. But it does not appear that the scenery or its inhabitants produced any effort of his muse, as was to have been wished and expected. From Annan, Burns proceeded to Dumfries, and thence through Sanquhar, to Mauchline in Ayrshire, where he arrived about the 8th of June 1787, after a long absence of six busy and eventful months." After all, however, Burns had one object of worldly business in his journey; namely, to examine the farms on the estate of Dalswinton, near Dumfries, the proprietor of which had, on learning that the poet designed to return to his original calling, expressed a strong wish to have him for his tenant.

"It will be easily conceived," adds Currie, "with what pleasure and pride he was received by his mother, his brothers, and sisters. He had left them poor, and comparatively friendless: he returned to them high in public estimation, and easy in his circumstances. He returned to them unchanged in his ardent affections, and ready to share with them to the uttermost farthing, the pittance that Fortune had be-

* Louis Cauvin, French teacher?

stowed." From the following letter, penned three days after his arrival, it appears that he did not at once proceed to Mossgiel, but slept one or more nights at his old howff, the Whitefoord Arms. A twelvemonth after this period, his words to Mrs. Dunlop, in reference to a domestic event which occurred in March 1788, tell the fact as delicately as language can express it:—"On my *eclatant* return to Mauchline, I was made very welcome to visit my girl, and the usual circumstances began to betray her, at the time I was laid up a cripple in Edinburgh."

(3) TO MR. JAMES SMITH,

AT MILLER AND SMITH'S OFFICE, LINLITHGOW.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

MAUCHLINE, 11*th June* 1787.

MY EVER DEAR SIR,—I date this from Mauchline, where I arrived on Friday even last. I slept at John Dow's, and called for my daughter; Mr. Hamilton and family; your mother, sister, and brother; my quondam Eliza, &c., all, all well. If any thing had been wanting to disgust me completely at Armour's family, their mean, servile compliance would have done it.

Give me a spirit like my favorite hero, Milton's Satan:

> "Hail, horrors! hail,
> Infernal world! and thou profoundest hell
> Receive thy new possessor? one who brings
> A mind not to be changed by *place* or *time!*"

I cannot settle to my mind.—Farming, the only thing of which I know anything, and heaven above knows, but little do I understand of that, I cannot, dare not risk on farms as they are. If I do not fix, I will go for Jamaica. Should I stay in an unsettled state at home, I would only dissipate my little fortune, and ruin what I intend shall compensate my

little ones, for the stigma I have brought on their names.

I shall write you more at length soon; as this letter costs you no postage, if it be worth reading you cannot complain of your penny-worth. — I am ever, my dear Sir, yours, R. B.

P. S.—The cloot* has unfortunately broke, but I have provided a fine buffalo-horn, on which I am going to affix the same cypher which you will remember was on the lid of the cloot.

"He returned," writes Lockhart thus powerfully, "the whole country ringing with his praises from a capital in which he was known to have formed the wonder and delight of the polite and the learned; if not rich, yet with more money already than any of his kindred had ever hoped to see him possess, and with prospects of future patronage and permanent elevation in the scale of society which might have dazzled steadier eyes than those of maternal and fraternal affection. The prophet had at last honor in his own country; but the haughty spirit that had preserved its balance in Edinburgh was not likely to lose it in Mauchline, and we have him writing from the *Auld Clay biggin* on the 18th of June, in terms as strongly expressive as any that ever came from his pen, of that jealous pride which formed the groundwork of his character; that dark suspiciousness of fortune, which the subsequent course of his history too well justified; that nervous intolerance of condescension, and consummate scorn of meanness which attend him through life, and made the study of his species, for which Nature had given him such extraordinary qualifications, the source of more pain than was ever counterbalanced by the exquisite capacity for enjoyment with which he was also endowed. There are few of his letters in which more of the dark places of his spirit come to light."

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* Snuff-boxes are often made of polished sheep-cloots, or hoofs. The horn which the poet procured and mounted as a snuff-box at this time was probably the same one he afterwards presented to Mr. Bacon, the landlord of Brownhill inn. It is a curious fact that Chambers not only omits this postscript, but his version of the letter differs in some points from that supplied by Cunningham.

(2) TO MR. WILLIAM NICOL, EDINBURGH.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

Mauchline, 18th June, 1787.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I am now arrived safe in my native country, after a very agreeable jaunt, and have the pleasure to find all my friends well. I breakfasted with your grey-headed, reverend friend, Mr. Smith; and was highly pleased both with the cordial welcome he gave me, and his most excellent appearance and sterling good sense.

I have been with Mr. Miller at Dalswinton, and am to meet him again in August. From my view of the lands and his reception of my bardship, my hopes in that business are rather mended; but still they are but slender.

I am quite charmed with Dumfries folks. Mr. Burnside, the clergyman, in particular, is a man whom I shall ever gratefully remember; and his wife, gude forgie me! I had almost broke the tenth commandment on her account. Simplicity, elegance, good sense, sweetness of disposition, good humor, kind hospitality, are the constituents of her manner and heart; in short—but if I say one word more about her, I shall be directly in love with her.

I never, my friend, thought mankind very capable of anything generous; but the stateliness of the patricians in Edinburgh, and the servility of my plebeian brethren (who perhaps formerly eyed me askance) since I returned home, have nearly put me out of conceit altogether with my species. I have bought a pocket Milton, which I carry perpetually about with me, in order to study the sentiments — the dauntless magnanimity, the intrepid, unyielding, independence, the desperate daring, and noble defiance of hardship, in

that great personage, SATAN. 'Tis true, I have just now a little cash; but I am afraid the star that hitherto has shed its malignant, purpose-blasting rays full in my zenith; that noxious planet so baneful in its influences to the rhyming tribe, I much dread it is not yet beneath my horizon. Misfortune dodges the path of human life; the poetic mind finds itself miserably deranged in, and unfit for, the walks of business; add to all, that thoughtless follies and hare-brained whims, like so many *ignes fatui*, eternally diverging from the right line of sober discretion, sparkle with step-bewitching blaze in the idly-gazing eyes of the poor heedless bard, till pop, "he falls like Lucifer, never to hope again." God grant this may be an unreal picture with respect to me; but should it not, I have very little dependence on mankind. I will close my letter with this tribute my heart bids me pay you—the many ties of acquaintance and friendship which I have, or think I have, in life, I have felt along the lines, and, damn them, they are almost all of them of such frail contexture, that I am sure they would not stand the breath of the least adverse breeze of fortune; but from you, my ever dear Sir, I look with confidence for the apostolic love that shall wait on me "through good report and bad report"—the love which Solomon emphatically says "is strong as death." My compliments to Mrs. Nicol, and all the circle of our common friends. R. B.

P.S.—I shall be in Edinburgh about the latter end of July.

Attached as Burns was to his only remaining parent, and to his brothers and sisters, and desirous as he may have been to make them partakers of his good fortune, we are not to wonder, says Lockhart, "after his exciting winter and spring, he should, just at this time have found himself incapable of sitting down contentedly for any considerable period together

in so humble and quiet a circle as that of Mossgiel. His appetite for wandering appears to have been only sharpened by his Border excursion."

Dr. Currie tells his readers that after remaining with his relations a few days, Burns set out on a journey to the West Highlands, but that no particulars of the tour have been found among his manuscripts, except the following fragment of a letter written during his progress, and a portion of another letter addressed to a friend after his return, giving some account of the latter stages of his excursion. Rumor and Tradition, however, have not been backward in their endeavors to fill up the blanks in the narrative. Possibly the angry Epigram at Inverary is the most interesting relic.

"Whoe'er he be that sojourn here,
I pity much his case,
Unless he comes to wait upon
The Lord *their* God, "His Grace."
There's naething here but Highland pride,
And Highland scab and hunger:
If Providence has sent me here,
'Twas surely in an anger."

"His Grace" at that period was John V., Duke of Argyll, about sixty-four years old, and the Duchess was Elizabeth Gunning, who had been formerly Duchess of Hamilton, mother of Douglas, Duke of Hamilton, one of the competitors in the great Douglas cause, but who was unsuccessful in his suit. The poet was mounted on his favorite mare "Jenny Geddes," and deemed himself as good as any of the host of tourists who applied for accommodation at the principal Inn, and could ill brook to be told that every stall in the stables and all the corners of the house were filled. We can only conjecture in what mood he clapped his spurs to Jenny's groin and scampered off.

(1) TO MR. ROBERT AINSLIE, EDINBURGH.

(Currie, 1800.)

Arrochar, near Crochairbas, by Loch Long,
June 28th, 1787.

My Dear Sir, I write you this on my tour through a country where savage streams tumble over savage

mountains, thinly overspread with savage flocks, which starvingly support as savage inhabitants. My last stage was Inverary—to-morrow night's stage, Dumbarton. I ought sooner to have answered your kind letter, but you know I am a man of many sins.

* * * * *

It is certain that during this excursion Burns picked up some acquaintanceship with Mr. John M'Auley, Town Clerk of Dumbarton, to whom we find him addressing an excellent letter about two years after this period. There are some retailers of gossip who are fain to make believe that the Poet was publicly entertained at Dumbarton on this occasion and presented with the freedom of the town. However, official and all other records are silent on this subject, which circumstance is attempted to be explained by suggesting that the Rev. James Oliphant, parish minister there, had influence enough with the public authorities to cause the record of that transaction to be suppressed. A motive for this supposed clerical interference is pointed to in the fact that Burns in his poem called "The Ordination" had referred to Oliphant as an enemy to Common-sense. The poet in fact never saw Oliphant; for he was but a youth of fifteen, when the latter was translated from Kilmarnock to Dumbarton.

(4) TO MR. JAMES SMITH, LINLITHGOW.

(CURRIE'S 4th Ed., 1803.)

June 30th, 1787.

* * * * *

On our return, at a Highland gentleman's hospitable mansion, we fell in with a merry party, and danced till the ladies left us, at three in the morning. Our dancing was none of the French or English insipid formal movements; the ladies sung Scotch songs like angels, at intervals; then we flew at *Bab at the Bowster*, *Tullochgorum*, *Loch Erroch-side*, *&c.*, like midges sporting in the mottie sun, or craws prognosticating a storm in a hairst day. When the dear lasses

left us, we ranged round the bowl till the good-fellow hour of six; except a few minutes that we went out to pay our devotions to the glorious lamp of day peering over the towering top of Ben-lomond. We all kneeled; our worthy landlord's son held the bowl; each man a full glass in his hand, and I as priest, repeated some rhyming nonsense, like Thomas-a-Rhymer's prophecies I suppose. After a small refreshment of the gifts of Somnus, we proceeded to spend the day on Lochlomond, and reach Dumbarton in the evening. We dined at another good fellow's house, and consequently push'd the bottle: when we went out to mount our horses, we found ourselves "No verra fou but gaylie yet." My two friends and I rode soberly down the Loch side, till by came a Highlandman at the gallop, on a tolerably good horse, but which had never known the ornaments of iron or leather. We scorned to be outgalloped by a Highlandman, so off we started, whip and spur. My companions, though seemingly gayly mounted, fell sadly astern; but my old mare, Jenny Geddes, one of the Rosinante family, she strained past the Highlandman in spite of all his efforts with the hair halter: just as I was passing him Donald wheeled his horse as if to cross before me to mar my progress, when down came his horse, and threw his rider's breekless a—e in a clipt hedge; and down came Jenny Geddes over all, and my bardship between her and the Highlandman's horse. Jenny Geddes trod over me with such cautious reverence that matters were not so bad as might well have been expected; so I came off with a few cuts and bruises, and a thorough resolution to be a pattern of sobriety for the future.

I have yet fixed on nothing with respect to the serious business of life. I am, just as usual, a rhyming, mason-making, rattling, aimless, idle fellow. However, I shall somewhere have a farm soon. I was going to

say a wife too; but that must never be my blessed lot. I am but a younger son of Parnassus, and like other younger sons of great families, I may intrigue if I choose to run all risks, but must not marry.

I am afraid I have almost ruined one source, the principal one, indeed, of my former happiness—that eternal propensity I always had to fall in love. My heart no more glows with feverish raptures, I have no paradisaical evening interviews, stolen from the restless cares and prying inhabitants of this weary world. I have only. . . . . This last is one of your distant acquaintances, has a fine figure, and elegant manners; and, in the train of some great folks whom you know, has seen the politest quarters in Europe. I do like her a good deal; but what piques me is her conduct at the commencement of our acquaintance. I frequently visited her when I was in [Edinburgh?] and after passing regularly the intermediate degrees between the distant formal bow and the familiar grasp round the waist, I ventured, in my careless way, to talk of friendship in rather ambiguous terms; and after her return to [Harvieston?], I wrote to her in the same style. Miss, construing my words farther than even I intended, flew off in a tangent of female dignity and reserve, like a mounting lark in an April morning; and wrote me an answer which measured me out very completely, what an immense way I had to travel before I could reach the climate of her favor. But I am an old hawk at the sport, and wrote her such a cool, deliberate, prudent reply, as brought my bird from her aerial towerings, pop, down at my foot, like Corporal Trim's hat.

As for the rest of my acts, and my wars, and all my wise sayings, and why my mare was called Jenny Geddes; they shall be recorded in a few weeks hence at Linlithgow, in the chronicles of your memory, by

ROBERT BURNS.

(4) TO MR. JOHN RICHMOND, EDINBURGH.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

MOSSGIEL, *7th July* 1787.

MY DEAR RICHMOND,—I am all impatience to hear of your fate since the old confounder of right and wrong has turned you out of place, by his journey to answer his indictment at the bar of the other world. He will find the practice of the court so different from the practice in which he has for so many years been thoroughly hackneyed, that his friends, if he had any connections truly of that kind, which I rather doubt, may well tremble for his sake. His chicane, his left-handed wisdom, which stood so firmly by him, to such good purpose here, like other accomplices in robbery and plunder, will, now the piratical business is blown, in all probability turn king's evidence, and then the devil's bagpiper will touch him off "Bundle and go!"

If he has left you any legacy, I beg your pardon for all this; if not, I know you will swear to every word I said about him.

I have lately been rambling over by Dumbarton and Inverary, and running a drunken race on the side of Loch Lomond with a wild Highlandman; his horse, which had never known the ornaments of iron or leather, zigzagged across before my old spavin'd hunter, whose name is Jenny Geddes, and down came the Highlandman, horse and all, and down came Jenny and my bardship; so I have got such a skinful of bruises and wounds, that I shall be at least four weeks before I dare venture on my journey to Edinburgh.

Not one new thing under the sun has happened in Mauchline since you left it. I hope this will find you as comfortably situated as formerly, or, if Heaven

pleases, more so; but, at all events, I trust you will let me know of course how matters stand with you, well or ill. 'Tis but poor consolation to tell the world when matters go wrong; but you know very well your connection and mine stands on a different footing,—I am ever, my dear friend, yours,

ROBT. BURNS.

We have thought it well not to interrupt the narrative supplied by the foregoing three letters, to point out that Chambers throws out the reasonable suggestion that on this occasion Burns may have been drawn towards Greenock and the West Highlands by his feelings towards the lately deceased Mary Campbell. "Imagination," he says, "fondly pauses to behold him stretched on her grave in the West Kirk Yard, bewailing her untimely severance from his arms. On these points, however, we have only conjecture, and the somewhat remarkable circumstance that this tour commences with a sort of mystery much like that with which he has contrived to invest the whole story of Highland Mary."

The latter portion of his letter to James Smith speaks very plainly regarding the disengaged state of his affections in love-matters—"My heart no more glows with feverish raptures. I have no paradisaical evening interviews, stolen from the restless cares and prying inhabitants of this weary world. I have only . . . . This last is one of your distant acquaintances. . . . I do like her a good deal," &c. Chambers observes that "no safe conjecture can be formed as to the person here meant, beyond that of her being an Ayrshire lady." We would narrow the uncertainty, by saying that she must have been from the neighborhood of Mauchline, if she was more or less known to James Smith, who was born there, and had only recently and for the first time left the district. And moreover, when she is described as possessing "a fine figure and elegant manners, and in the train of some great folks (known to Smith) has seen the politest quarters of Europe," we are shut up to the belief that Burns here refers to none of the "Belles of Mauchline" already celebrated by "Rob Mossgiel," but to a lady of some quality, perhaps Peggy Chalmers, daughter of Mr. Chalmers of Fingland, sometime a farmer in the neighborhood of Mauchline, where indeed Miss Chalmers had lived prior to her removal to Edinburgh, on the death of her father. That she had passed some period

of her youth on the Continent with her elder sister Lady Mackenzie, may be presumed from the fact, that she herself spent the latter years of her long widowhood at Pau in the South of France. Her mother was a sister of Gavin Hamilton's stepmother, and also a sister of Mrs. Tait of Harvieston: of the poet's intercourse with that circle the reader will learn more in due course.

(4) To ROBERT AIKEN, ESQ., AYR.

WITH COPY OF ELEGY FOR SIR JAMES HUNTER BLAIR.

(DR. WADDELL'S ED., 1869.)

MAUCHLINE, [14*th July* 1787.]

MY HONORED FRIEND,—The melancholy occasion of the foregoing Poem affects not only individuals but a country. That I have lost a friend, is but repeating after Caledonia. This copy, rather an incorrect one, I beg you will accept, till I have an opportunity in person, which I expect to have on Tuesday first, of assuring you how sincerely I ever am, honored Sir, your oft obliged, ROBT. BURNS.

MR. HAMILTON'S OFFICE,
*Saturday Evening.**

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*In supplement to what we have said in our note to this Elegy, p. 102, *supra*, we may observe that its subject was a son of John Hunter, Esq., of Milneholm. He was born in 1740, and in 1770 assumed the name of Hunter Blair on his marriage to Jane, the daughter and heiress of Blair of Dunskey. As one of the partners of the banking house of Sir William Forbes & Co., he was well known and much esteemed. In June 1786 he was created a baronet, while Lord Provost of Edinburgh and M.P. for that city. He died somewhat suddenly on 1st July 1787, and his eldest son and successor, Sir James, dying unmarried in 1800, the succession devolved on his second son, Sir David Hunter Blair of Blairquhan, Bart., who survived till 26th Dec. 1857. The latter was succeeded by his second son Sir Edward, born in 1818, who in 1850 married Miss Wauchope, granddaughter of Andrew Wauchope, Esq., of Niddry-Merschell, Midlothian.

The name of the late Sir David was long familiar to Protestant Scotland from the imprint on the title pages of its Bibles, as principal partner of the firm of "Sir D. Hunter Blair and J. Bruce, Printers to the King's most excellent Majesty."

(2) TO MR. PETER HILL, AT MR. CREECH'S, EDINBURGH.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

D^R^. SIR,—I have just got a letter from Scot the Bookbinder, where he tells me he needs a little money at present. I have written him to call on you; and I beg you will pay him his acc^t^. or give him part payment, as you see proper.

When Mr. Creech returns, I beg you will let me know by first convenient Post,—I am, dear Sir, your very humble serv^t^. ROB^T^. BURNS.

MAUCHLINE, 19*th July* 1787.

(2) TO MR. ROBERT AINSLIE, JUNR.

(HOGG AND MOTHERWELL, 1835.)

MY DEAR AINSLIE,—There is one thing for which I set great store by you as a friend, and it is this—that I have not a friend upon earth, besides yourself, to whom I can talk nonsense without forfeiting some degree of his esteem. Now, to one like me, who never cares for speaking anything else but nonsense, such a friend as you is an invaluable treasure. I was never a rogue, but have been a fool all my life; and, in spite of all my endeavors, I see now plainly that I shall never be wise. Now it rejoices my heart to have met with such a fellow as you, who, though you are not just such a hopeless fool as I, yet I trust you will never listen so much to the temptations of the devil, as to grow so very wise that you will in the least disrespect an honest fellow because he is a fool. In short, I have set you down as the staff of my old age, when

the whole list of my friends will, after a decent share of pity, have forgot me.

> "Though in the morn comes sturt and strife,
> Yet joy may come at noon;
> And I hope to live a merry, merry life,
> When a' thir days are done."

Write me soon, were it but a few lines just to tell me how that good sagacious man, your father, is—that kind, dainty body your mother—that strapping chield your brother Douglas—and my friend Rachel, who is as far before Rachel of old, as she was before her blear-eyed sister Leah.

ROB^T. BURNS.

MAUCHLINE, 23*rd July* 1787.

Among the families of some position whom the poet was introduced to shortly after he reached Edinburgh was that of Macleod of Raasay, one of whose accomplished daughters had been married to Col. James Mure Campbell, of Rowallan, who, in 1782, succeeded to the Earldom of Loudon. The lady having died in 1780, shortly after the birth of her first-born child—a daughter, Flora, became Countess of Loudon on the death of her father in 1786, and the upbringing of the infant was committed to her aunts, the Misses Macleod, while Mr. Gavin Hamilton had charge of the Loudon estates. This explains how Burns became acquainted with the family. The old laird, John Macleod, who had Johnson and Boswell for his guests at Raasay in 1773, died at Edinburgh in December 1786, in his seventieth year; and his son, John Macleod, also died there on 20th July 1787. On this latter occasion Burns composed some beautiful consolatory verses (given at p. 81, Vol. II.), intended for the special comfort of Miss Isabella Macleod with whom he had contracted "a particular friendship" while in Edinburgh.

Reverting to a passage in the poet's letter to James Smith of 30th June 1787, we are reminded of a masonic incident related by Professor Dugald Stewart in his beautiful reminiscences of Burns, supplied to Dr. Currie. The passage in the letter is this:—"I have yet fixed on nothing with respect to the serious business of life; I am, just as usual, a rhyming, mason-making, aimless, idle fellow." Our quotation from

Professor Stewart is as follows:—"In summer 1787 I passed some weeks in Ayrshire, and saw Burns occasionally. I think he told me that he had made an excursion that season to the West Highlands, and that he also visited what Beattie calls the Arcadian ground of Scotland, upon the banks of the Teviot and the Tweed. In the course of the same season I was led by curiosity to attend for an hour or two a Mason Lodge in Mauchline where Burns presided. He had occasion to make some short unpremeditated compliments to different individuals from whom he had no reason to expect a visit, and everything he said was happily conceived, and forcibly, as well as fluently expressed. His manner of speaking in public had evidently the marks of some practice in extempore elocution."

From the books of St. James's Tarbolton Lodge, we are happy to be enabled now to lay before the reader, a copy of the poet's own minute of the Lodge meeting above referred to by Professor Stewart. This was one of the occasions referred to by Burns at page 161 *supra*, on which he met the brother of "The Lass of Ballochmyle" on terms of some equality.

MASON LODGE MINUTE.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

MAUCHLINE, 25*th July* 1787.

THIS night the Deputation of the Lodge met at Mauchline, and entered Brother Alexander Allison of Barnmuir an apprentice. Likewise admitted Brs. Professor Stuart of Cathrine, and Claude Alexander, Esq., of Ballochmyle; Claude Neilson, Esq., Paisley; John Farquhar Gray, Esq., of Gilmiscroft; and Dr. George Grierson, Glasgow,* Honorary Members of the Lodge.

ROBT. BURNS, D.M.

We have now brought the reader down to 2nd August 1787, the date of the poet's autobiographical letter to Dr. Moore.

* This is probably the Dr. Grierson, whom Waddell supposes to have accompanied Burns in his excursion to Inverary and the West-Highlands.—J. H.

(See Vol. 1, p. 332). On the 7th of that month Burns arrived in Edinburgh, which became again his head-quarters for even a more lengthened period than was embraced in his first sojourn there. He had in prospect an extensive tour to the North Highlands along with his friend, Mr. William Nicol, the High School teacher, and he appears to have, for a fortnight or thereby, accepted a lodgement in Nicol's house.

(8) TO MR. ARCHIBALD LAWRIE.*

(CHAMBERS ED., 1856.)

EDINBURGH, 14*th August* 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,—Here am I—that is all I can tell you of that unaccountable being myself. What I am doing no mortal can tell; what I am thinking, I myself cannot tell; what I am usually saying, is not worth telling. The clock is just striking one, two, three, four, —, —, —, —, —, —, —, twelve, forenoon; and here I sit, in the attic story, *alias* the garret, with a friend on the right hand of my standish—a friend whose kindness I shall largely experience at the close of this line—there—thank you—a friend, my dear Mr. Lawrie, whose kindness, often makes me blush; a friend who has more of the milk of *human* kindness than all the human race put together, and what is highly to his honor, peculiarly a friend to the friendless as often as they come in his way; in short, Sir, he is, without the least alloy, a universal philanthropist; and his much beloved name is—a bottle of good old Port! In a week, if whim and weather serve, I shall set out for the North—a tour of the Highlands.

I ate some Newhaven broth, in other words, boiled

* This young man latterly succeeded his father, Dr. George Lawrie, as minister of London, and married a sister of Dr. James M'Kenrick Adair, who espoused Charlotte Hamilton.

mussels, with Mr. Farquhar's family, t'other day. Now I see you prick up your ears. They are all well, and Mademoiselle is particularly well. She begs her respects to you all; along with which please present those of your humble servant. I can no more. I have so high a veneration, or rather idolatrisation, for the cleric character, that even a little *futurum esse vel fuisse Priestling*, in his *Penna pennae pennae*, &c., throws an awe over my mind in his presence, and shortens my sentences into single ideas.

Farewell, and believe me to be ever, my dear Sir, yours, ROBERT BURNS.

A legal document, dated one day after the foregoing merry letter was penned, still exists, testifying strongly to the poet's inveterate proneness to indulge in "a passion remarkable for the humiliations to which it exposes its victims." It is a writ of discharge to the poet liberating him from the restraints of a caption, or warrant of imprisonment issued against him, as *in meditatione fugæ*, at instance of a young woman who alleged herself to be with child to him. That this document had been preserved and carried about by the poet for some time, is apparent from its condition, and a couple of verses of an old indecent song that are scribbled in pencil by his own hand on the back.

It would be an idle kind of industry were we to attempt to trace out the particular incidents in the misdoings of the bard to which that document relates; the Clarinda correspondence speaks of one "Jenny Clow" in the Grassmarket, who bore him a son; and he himself, in the Thomson correspondence, tells of "a Highland wench in the Cowgate who bare him three bastards at a birth." The next letter tells of similar "donsie tricks" of his apt young pupil, Robert Ainslie. (See on this subject the note to "Robin shure in hairst," page 39, Vol. III.)

(3) TO MR. ROBERT AINSLIE, JUNR,

BERRYWELL, DUNSE.

(ALDINE EDITION, 1839.) *

"As I gaed up to Dunse,
To warp a pickle yarn,
Robin, silly body,
He gat me wi' bairn."

FROM henceforth, my dear Sir, I am determined to set off with my letters like the periodical Writers; viz., prefix a kind of text quoted from some Classic of undoubted Authority, such as the Author of the immortal piece, of which my text is a part. What I have to say on my text is exhausted in a letter I wrote you the other day, before I had the pleasure of receiving yours from Inverleithen; and sure never was anything more lucky, as I have but the time to write this, that Mr. Nicol on the opposite side of the table, takes to correct a proof-sheet of a thesis. They are gabbling Latin so loud that I cannot hear what my own soul is saying in my own scull, so must just give you a matter-of-fact sentence or two, and end, if time permit, with a verse *de rei generatione.*

To-morrow I leave Edin^h^. in a chaise; Nicol thinks it more comfortable than horseback, to which I say, Amen; so Jenny Geddes goes home to Ayrshire, to use a phrase of my mother's, "wi' her finger in her mouth."

Now for a modest verse of classical authority:—

The cats like kitchen;
The dogs like broo;
The lasses like the lads weel,
And th' auld wives too.
Chorus—An' we're a' noddin,
Nid, nid, noddin,
We're a' noddin fou at e'en.

* The original MS. of this letter is now in the South Kensington Museum, London.

If this does not please you, let me hear from you: if you write any time before the first of September, direct to Inverness, to be left at the Post Office till called for; the next week at Aberdeen, the next at Edin^h^. The sheet is done, and I shall just conclude with assuring you that I am, and ever with pride shall be, My dear Sir, ROB^T^. BURNS.

Call your boy what you think proper, only interject BURNS. What say you to a scripture name; for instance, Zimri Burns Ainslie, or Achitophel, &c., &c.; look your Bible for these two heroes. If you do this, I will repay the Compliment.

EDIN^H^. *23rd August* 1787.

(1) TO ST. JAMES'S LODGE, TARBOLTON.

(DR. WADDELL'S ED., 1869.)

EDINBURGH, *23rd August* 1787.

MEN AND BRETHREN.—I am truly sorry it is not in my power to be at your quarterly meeting. If I must be absent in body, believe me I shall be present in spirit. I suppose those who owe us monies, by bill or otherwise, will appear—I mean those we summoned. If you please, I wish you would delay prosecuting defaulters till I come home. The court is up, and I will be home before it sits down. In the meantime, to take a note of who appear and who do not, of our faulty debtors, will be right in my humble opinion; and those who confess debt and crave days, I think we should spare them. Farewell!

Within your dear mansion may wayward Contention,
And withered Envy ne'er enter;
May Secrecy round be the mystical bound,
And Brotherly Love be the centre.

ROB^T^. BURNS.

TO THE FREE MASONS OF ST. JAMES'S LODGE,
Care of H. MANSON, TARBOLTON.

THE HIGHLAND TOUR.

THE earliest trace of the poet's personal memoranda of this tour which we can find, is in his Life by Lockhart, 1828. Dr. Currie makes no reference to the Journal, and merely directs the reader to a letter in the correspondence addressed to Gilbert by his brother, on the day after returning to Edinburgh, giving a general outline of the journey. That biographer also gives a letter from Mr. Josiah Walker of Perth, containing a few particulars of the visit to Blair Athole; followed by some information, sent by Dr. Couper of Fochabers, about the visit to Gordon Castle.

Lockhart thus introduces his extracts from the poet's own record of his progress through the Highlands:—"Some fragments of his Journal have recently been discovered, and are now in my hands; so that I may hope to add some interesting particulars to the account of Dr. Currie. The travellers hired a post-chaise for their expedition—the High School Master being probably no very skilful equestrian." The portions printed by Mr. Lockhart correspond with the Journal, as afterwards published more fully by Cunningham, whose version has, since 1834, been frequently printed. Although unable to ascertain where that manuscript now is, Mr. Douglas had the good fortune to fall in with the identical note book carried by Burns, and used as a scroll-record of this Tour. An inspection of it proved that the manuscript referred to by Lockhart must have been an extended transcript from this rough original. The latter interesting relic of the bard is the property of James T. Gibson Craig, Esq., who submitted it to Mr. Douglas, for use in his Edition. He was thus enabled to introduce a few happy variations, and to fill up some blanks that occur in the record as commonly printed. We give the Journal as it appears in Mr. Douglas's Edition.

EDINBURGH, 25*th Aug.* 1787.

[*Saturday*] I set out for the north in company with my good friend Mr. N——. From Corstorphine, by Kirkliston and Winchburgh, fine, improven, fertile country: near Linlithgow the lands worse, light and sandy. LINLITHGOW, the appearance of rude, decayed, idle grandeur, charmingly rural, retired situation. The

old rough palace a tolerably fine but melancholy ruin —sweetly situated on a small elevation by the brink of a loch. Shown the room where the beautiful, injured Mary Queen of Scots was born—A pretty good old Gothic church — the infamous stool of repentance standing, in the old Romish way, in a lofty situation. What a poor, pimping business is a Presbyterian place of worship! dirty, narrow, squalid; stuck in a corner of old popish grandeur such as Linlithgow, and much more Melrose. Ceremony and show, if judiciously thrown in, absolutely necessary for the bulk of mankind, both in religious and civil matters.

West Lothian. — The more elegance and luxury among the farmers, I always observe, in equal proportions, the rudeness and stupidity of the peasantry. This remark I have made all over the Lothians, Merse, Roxburgh, &c.; and for this, among other reasons, I think that a man of romantic taste, a "man of feeling," will be better pleased with the poverty, but intelligent minds of the peasantry in Ayrshire, (peasantry they are all below the Justice of Peace) than the opulence of a club of Merse farmers, when he at the same time considers the Vandalism of *their* ploughfolks, &c. I carry this idea so far, that an uninclosed, half-improven country is to me actually more agreeable, and gives me more pleasure as a prospect, than a country cultivated like a garden.*

Dine.—Go to my friend Mr. Smith's at Avon Printfield—find nobody but Mrs. Miller, an agreeable, sensible, modest, good body; as useful, but not so ornamental as Fielding's Miss Western—not rigidly polite à la Française, but easy, hospitable, and housewifely.

An old lady from Paisley, a Mrs. Dawson, whom I promise to call for in Paisley — like old Lady Wau-

* "It is hardly to be expected that Robert Burns should have estimated the wealth of nations entirely on the principles of a political economist."—LOCKHART.

chope, and still more like Mrs. C——, her conversation is pregnant with strong sense and just remark, but, like them, a certain air of self-importance and a *duresse* in the eye, seem to indicate, as the Ayrshire wife observed of her cow, that "she had a mind o' her ain." *

Pleasant distant view of Dunfermline and the rest of the fertile coast of Fife as we go down to that dirty, ugly place, Borrowstouness. See a horse-race and call on a friend of Mr. Nicol's, a Bailie Cowan, of whom I know too little to attempt his portrait. Come through the rich carse of Falkirk to Falkirk to pass the night.

[*Sunday, 26th Aug.*] Falkirk nothing remarkable except the tomb of Sir John the Graham, over which, in the succession of time, four stones have been laid. —Camelon, the ancient metropolis of the Picts, now a small village, in the neighborhood of Falkirk.—Cross the grand canal to Carron. Breakfast—come past Larbert and admire a fine monument of cast-iron erected by Mr. Bruce, the African traveller, to his wife. *N. B.*—He used her very ill, and I suppose he meant it as much out of gratitude to Heaven, as anything else.†

Pass Dunipace, a place laid out with fine taste—a charming amphitheatre bounded by Denny village, and pleasant seats of Herbertshire, Denovan, and down to Dunipace. The Carron running down the bosom of the whole makes it one of the most charming little prospects I have seen.

Dine at Auchenbowie—Mr. Monro an excellent, worthy old man—Miss Monro an amiable, sensible,

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* By "Lady Wauchope," is meant Mrs. Scott of Wauchope, referred to in the poet's Border Tour, page 293. "Mrs. C——" may have been Mrs. Cockburn of Crichton Street, Edinburgh.

† Bruce's second wife, Mary, eldest daughter of Thos. Dundas, Esq., of Carronhall, whom he married 20th May 1776; he had three children by her, and she died in 1784. James Bruce of Kinnaird died 27th April 1794.

sweet young woman, much resembling Mrs. Grierson.* Come to Bannockburn—shewn the old house where James III. was murdered. The field of Bannockburn —the hole where glorious Bruce set his standard. Here no Scot can pass uninterested. I fancy to myself that I see my gallant, heroic countrymen coming o'er the hill, and down upon the plunderers of their country, the murderers of their fathers; noble revenge and just hate glowing in every vein, striding more and more eagerly as they approach the oppressive, insulting, blood-thirsty foe. I see them meet in gloriously triumphant congratulation on the victorious field, exulting in their heroic royal leader, and rescued liberty and independence.—Come to Stirling.

(6) TO MR. ROBERT MUIR, KILMARNOCK.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

STIRLING, *26th August*, 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,—I intended to have written you from Edinburgh, and now write you from Stirling to make an excuse. Here am I, on my way to Inverness, with a truly original, but very worthy man, a Mr. Nicol, one of the masters of the High School in Edinburgh. I left Auld Reekie yesterday morning, and have passed, besides by-excursions, Linlithgow, Borrowstouness, Falkirk, and here am I undoubtedly. This morning I knelt at the tomb of Sir John the Graham, the gallant friend of the immortal Wallace; and two hours ago I said a fervent prayer for Old Caledonia, over the hole in a blue whinstone, where Robert de Bruce fixed his royal standard on the banks of Bannockburn; and just now, from Stirling Castle,

* The wife of George Grierson, Glasgow.

I have seen by the setting sun the glorious prospect of the windings of Forth through the rich carse of Stirling, and skirting the equally rich carse of Falkirk. The crops are very strong, but so very late, that there is no harvest, except a ridge or two perhaps in ten miles, all the way I have travelled from Edinburgh.

I left Andrew Bruce * and family all well. I will be at least three weeks in making my tour, as I shall return by coast, and have many people to call for.

My best compliments to Charles † our dear kinsman and fellow-saint; and Messrs. W. and H. Parkers. I hope Hughoc ‡ is going on and prospering with God and Miss M'Causlin.

If I could think on anything sprightly, I should let you hear every other post; but a dull, matter-of-fact business, like this scrawl, the less and seldomer one writes the better.

Among other matters of fact I shall add this, that I am and ever shall be, my dear Sir,—Your obliged,

ROBT. BURNS.

[*Monday, 27th August.*] Go to Harvieston—Mrs. Hamilton and family—Mrs. Chalmers—Mrs. Shields—Go to see Cauldron linn, and Rumbling-brig, and the Deil's mill. Return in the evening to Stirling.

Supper—Messrs. Doig (the Schoolmaster) and Bell; Captain Forrester of the Castle—Doig a queerish figure, and something of a pedant—Bell a joyous, vacant fellow who sings a good song—Forrester a merry, swearing kind of a man, with a dash of the Sodger.

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* Andrew Bruce, a shopkeeper on the North Bridge, Edinburgh, to whom the poet directed his letters to be addressed, appears to have been originally from Kilmarnock.

† Charles Samson, a brother of the celebrated "Tam."

‡ Mr. Hugh Parker, then in terms of courtship with the lady mentioned.

(4) TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ., MAUCHLINE.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

STIRLING, 28*th August*, 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,—Here am I on my way to Inverness. I have rambled over the rich fertile carses of Falkirk and Stirling, and am delighted with their appearance: richly waving crops of wheat, barley, &c., but no harvest at all yet, except, in one or two places, an old wife's ridge. Yesterday morning I rode from this town up the meandering Devon's banks to pay my respects to some Ayrshire folks at Harvieston. After breakfast we made a party to go and see the famous Caudron-linn, a remarkable cascade in the Devon, about five miles above Harvieston; and after spending one of the most pleasant days I ever had in my life, I returned to Stirling in the evening. They are a family, Sir, though I had not had any prior tie—though they had not been the brothers and sisters of a certain generous friend of mine—I would never forget them. I am told you have not seen them these several years, so you can have very little idea of what these young folks are now. Your brother* is as tall as you are, but slender rather than otherwise; and I have the satisfaction to inform you that he is getting the better of those consumptive symptoms which I suppose you know were threatening him. His make, and particularly his manner, resemble you, but he will have a still finer face. (I put in the word *still*, to please Mrs. Hamilton.) Good sense, modesty, and at

* "Step-brother" is here meant. Mr. John Hamilton, father of the poet's friend and patron, Gavin Hamilton, was twice married; his second wife (now a widow) was one of three sisters, namely, the deceased Mrs. Tait of Harvieston, Mrs. Chalmers (also a widow, the mother of Lady M'Kenzie and Miss Margaret Chalmers), and herself, the mother of Charlotte and other children, who resided at Harvieston, by way of keeping house for Mr. Tait.

the same time a just idea of that respect that man owes to man, and has a right in his turn to exact, are striking features in his character; and, what with me is the Alpha and Omega, he has a heart that might adorn the breast of a poet! Grace has a good figure, and the look of health and cheerfulness, but nothing else remarkable in her person. I scarcely ever saw so striking a likeness as is between her and your little Beenie; the mouth and chin particularly. She is reserved at first; but as we grew better acquainted, I was delighted with the native frankness of her manner, and the sterling sense of her observation. Of Charlotte I cannot speak in common terms of admiration; she is not only beautiful but lovely. Her form is elegant; her features not regular, but they have the smile of sweetness and the settled complacency of good nature in the highest degree; and her complexion, now that she has happily recovered her wonted health, is equal to Miss Burnet's. After the exercise of our riding to the Falls, Charlotte was exactly Dr. Donne's mistress:—

> ——— "Her pure and eloquent blood
> Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought,
> That one would almost say her body thought."

Her eyes are fascinating; at once expressive of good sense, tenderness, and a noble mind.

I do not give you all this account, my good Sir, to flatter you. I mean it to reproach you. Such relations the first peer in the realm might own with pride; then why do you not keep up more correspondence with these so amiable young folks? I had a thousand questions to answer about you. I had to describe the little ones with the minuteness of anatomy. They were highly delighted when I told them that John*

* The "wee curlie Johnie" of the *Dedication to G. H.*

was so good a boy, and so fine a scholar, and that Willie* was going on still very pretty; but I have it on commission to tell her from them that beauty is a poor silly bauble, without she be good. Miss Chalmers I had left in Edinburgh, but I had the pleasure of meeting with Mrs. Chalmers, only Lady Mackenzie being rather a little alarmingly ill of a sore throat somewhat marred our enjoyment.

I shall not be in Ayrshire for four weeks. My most respectful compliments to Mrs. Hamilton, Miss Kennedy, and Doctor Mackenzie. I shall probably write him from some stage or other. I am ever, Sir,—Yours most gratefully,

ROBT. BURNS.

Tuesday morning, [28*th Aug.*] Breakfast with Captain Forrester—leave Stirling—Ochil Hills—Devon River—Forth and Teith—Allan River—Strathallan, a fine country but little improven—Ardoch Camp—Cross Earn to Crieff—Dine, and go to Arbruchil; cold reception at Arbruchil—A most romantically pleasant ride up Earn, by Auchertyre and Comrie—Sup at Crieff.

Wednesday Morning, [29*th Aug.*] Leave Crieff—Glen Almond—Almond River—Ossian's Grave—Loch Frioch—Glenquaich—Landlord and landlady remarkable characters—Taymouth—described in rhyme—Meet the Hon. Charles Townshend.

Thursday, [30*th Aug.*] Come down Tay to Dunkeld—Glenlyon House—Lyon River—Druid's Temple—three circles of stones, the outermost sunk; the second has thirteen stones remaining; the innermost has eight; two large detached ones like a gate, to the south-east—Say prayers in it—Pass Tay Bridge—Aber-

* Miss Wilhelmina, then nine years old, married, on 3rd March 1806, the Rev. John Tod of Mauchline, successor to "Daddie Auld." In the announcement she is styled "Miss W. Kennedy Hamilton, daughter of the *late* Gavin Hamilton, Esq." Mrs. Tod died in March 1858.

feldy—described in rhyme—Castle Menzies, beyond Grandtully—Balleighan—Logierait—Inver—Dr. Stewart—Sup.

Friday, [31*st Aug.*] Walk with Mrs. Stewart and Beard to Birnam top—fine prospect down Tay—Craigiebarns Hills—Hermitage on the Bran Water, with a picture of Ossian—Breakfast with Dr. Stewart—Neil Gow plays; a short, stout-built Highland figure, with his greyish eyes shed on his honest social brow—an interesting face, marking strong sense, kind open-heartedness, mixed with unmistrusting simplicity—visit his house—Margaret Gow. Ride up Tummel River to Blair. Fascally, a beautiful, romantic nest—wild grandeur of the pass of Gillikrankie—visit the gallant Lord Dundee's stone. Blair—Sup with the Duchess—easy and happy from the manners of that family—confirmed in my good opinion of my friend Walker.

Excerpt from a letter addressed to Mr. Alex. Cunningham by Mr. Josiah Walker, dated Perth, 24th Oct. 1797.—"On reaching Blair, Burns sent me notice of his arrival, and I hastened to meet him at the inn. The Duke, to whom he brought a letter of introduction, was from home; but the Duchess, being informed of his arrival, gave him an invitation to sup and sleep at Athole House. He accepted the invitation, but as the hour of supper was at some distance, begged I would, in the interval, be his guide through the grounds. It was already growing dark; yet the softened, though faint and uncertain view of their beauties, which the moonlight afforded us, seemed exactly suited to the state of his feelings at the time. I had often, like others, experienced the pleasures which arise from the sublime or elegant landscape, but I never saw those feelings so intense as in Burns. When we reached a rustic hut on the river Tilt, where it is overhung by a woody precipice, from which there is a noble waterfall, he threw himself on the heathy seat, and gave himself up to a tender, abstracted, and voluptuous enthusiasm of imagination. I cannot help thinking it might have been here that he conceived the idea of the following lines, which he afterwards introduced into his poem on *Bruar Water*, when

only fancying such a combination of objects as were now present to his eye—

> "Or, by the reaper's nightly beam,
> Mild, chequering thro' the trees,
> Rave to my darkly-dashing stream,
> Hoarse-swelling on the breeze."

It was with much difficulty I prevailed on him to quit this spot, and to be introduced in proper time to supper.

"My curiosity was great to see how he would conduct himself in company so different from what he had been accustomed to. His manner was unembarrassed, plain and firm. He appeared to have complete reliance on his own native good sense for directing his behavior. He seemed at once to perceive and to appreciate what was due to the company and to himself, and never to forget a proper respect for the separate species of dignity belonging to each. He did not arrogate conversation, but when led to it, he spoke with ease, propriety, and manliness. He tried to exert his abilities, because he knew it was ability alone gave him a title to be there. The Duke's fine young family attracted much of his admiration; he drank their healths as 'honest men and bonie lasses,' an idea which was much applauded by the company, and with which he has very felicitously closed the poem alluded to.

"Next day [Saturday, 1st Sep.] I took a ride with him through some of the most romantic parts of that neighborhood, and was highly gratified by his conversation. As a specimen of his happiness of conception and strength of expression, I will mention a remark which he made on his fellow-traveller, who was engaged in fishing at the time, a few paces from us.* He was a man of robust but clumsy person; and while Burns was expressing to me the value he entertained for him, on account of his vigorous talents, although they were clouded at times by coarseness of manners; 'in short,' he added, 'his mind is like his body, he has a confounded strong in-knee'd sort of a soul.'

"Much attention was paid to Burns both before and after the Duke's return, of which he was perfectly sensible, without being vain; and at his departure I recommended to him, as

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* The writer of this letter afterwards produced a Memoir of Burns, in which he explains how deftly he had managed to separate Nicol from Burns without offence, during the visit to Blair. This was accomplished by furnishing the schoolmaster with a rod and tackle, and engrossing his attention with fishing—a sport which he was very partial to.

the most appropriate return he could make, to write some descriptive verses on any of the scenes with which he had been so much delighted. After leaving Blair, he, by the Duke's advice, visited the *Falls of Bruar*, and in a few days I received a letter from Inverness in which he inclosed the poem on '*Bruar Water.*' "]

Saturday, [*1st Sept.*] Visit the scenes round Blair —fine, but spoilt with bad taste—Tilt and Garrie rivers—Falls on the Tilt—Heather seat—Ride in company with Sir William Murray and Mr. Walker, to Loch Tummel—meanderings of the Rannoch, which runs thro' *quondam* Struan Robertson's estate from Loch Rannoch to Loch Tummel—Dine at Blair—Company—General Murray, Orien. Capt. Murray, an honest Tar; Sir William Murray, an honest, worthy man, but tormented with the hypochondria; Mrs. Graham, *belle et amiable;* Miss Cathcart; Mrs. Murray, a painter; Mrs. King; Duchess and fine family, the Marquis, Lords James, Edward, and Robert; Ladies Charlotte, Emelia, and children—Dance—Sup—Duke; Mr. Graham of Fintray; Mr. M'Laggan; Mr. and Mrs. Stewart.*

Sunday, [*2d Sep.*] Come up the Garrie—Falls of Bruar—Allecairoch—Dalwhinnie—Dine—Snow on the hills, 17 feet deep; no corn from Loch Gairie to Dalwhinnie—cross the Spey, and come down the stream to Pitnim—Straths rich; *les environs* picturesque—Craigow hill—Ruthven of Badenoch—Barrack; wild and magnificent. Rothemurche (Rothiemurchus) on the other side, and Glenmore—Grant of Rothemurche's poetry—told me by the Duke of Gordon; Strathspeys rich and romantic.

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* It seems evident that the poet and Nicol started from Athole House after breakfast on Sunday morning. It also appears that Burns had carried with him his Autobiographical letter to Moore, and favored the Duchess with a reading of it. We learn this fact from Mr. Walker's letter to Burns of 13th Sept. 1787: "The Duchess would give any consideration for another sight of your letter to Dr. Moore."

Monday, [*3d Sep.*] Breakfast at Aviemore, a wild romantic spot—Snows in patches on the hills 18 feet deep—Enter Strathspey—come to Sir James Grant's—dine—company—Lady Grant a sweet pleasant body—Mr. and Miss Bailie; Mrs. Bailie; Dr. and Mrs. Grant—Clergymen—Mr. Hepburn—come through mist and darkness to Dulsie to lie.

Tuesday, [*4th Sep.*] Findhorn river—rocky banks—come on to Castle Cawdor where Macbeth murdered King Duncan—saw the bed in which King Duncan was stabbed—dine at Kilraik, Mrs. Rose, senr., a true chieftain's wife, a daughter of Clephane——Mrs. Rose, junr.—Fort George—Inverness.

(6) TO MR. JAMES BURNESS, WRITER, MONTROSE.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

DR. COUSIN,—I wrote you from Edinr. that I intended being north. I shall be in Stonhive* sometime on Monday the 10th inst., and I beg the favor of you to meet me there. I understand there is but one Inn at Stonhive, so you cannot miss me. As I am in the country I certainly shall see any of my father's relations that are any way near my road; but I do not even know their names, or where one of them lives, so I hope you will meet me and be my guide. Farewell! till I have the pleasure of meeting you.—I am ever, dr. Sir, yours.

ROBT. BURNS.†

INVERNESS, *4th Sept.* 1787.

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* Stonehive is the local name for Stonehaven, the county town of Kincardineshire, and some 12 miles south of Edinburgh on the road to Montrose.—J. H.

† The original letter is in the Poet's Monument at Edinburgh, and Mr. Burness has appended the following note below:—"The signature of this letter cut off and presented to Robt. Caddell, Esq., Bookseller, Edinburgh, 18th Dec. 1829.—J. B."

(1) TO WILLIAM INGLIS, ESQ., INVERNESS.

(DR. HATELY WADDELL'S ED.)

MR. BURNS presents his most respectful compliments to Mr. Inglis—would have waited on him with the inclosed,* but is jaded to death with the fatigue of to-day's journey—won't leave Inverness till Thursday morning.

ETTLES HOTEL, *Tuesday Evening.*

Wednesday, [*5th Sep.*] Loch Ness—Braes of Ness—General's hut—Fall of Fyers—Urquhart Castle and Strath. Dine at ———, Sup at Mr. Inglis's—Mr. Inglis and Mrs. Inglis: three young ladies.

(1) TO MR. WALKER BLAIR OF ATHOLE.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

INVERNESS, *5th Sept.* 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have just time to write the foregoing,† and to tell you that it was (at least most part of it) the effusion of an half-hour I spent at Bruar. I do not mean it was *extempore*, for I have

* The enclosure was a letter of introduction to that gentleman (then Provost of Inverness) from the poet's friend, William Dunbar, Esq., W.S. "Colonel of the Crochallan Club" in the following terms:—"Dear Sir,—The gentleman by whom this will be delivered to you is Mr. Burns of Airshire, who goes on an excursion to the North, personally unacquainted, excepting in so far as his elegant and simple Poems may have caught your attention. To men of such liberal and disinterested feelings as I know the citizens of Inverness to be, little seemed necessary as recommendatory of the Bard of Nature. Yet I thought it unworthy of me to permit him to migrate without mentioning him to you as my friend, and consigning him to you for that civility which distinguishes you among all ranks of *migrants*. I offer my best respects to Mrs. Inglis, and am always, dear Sir, your most obedt. servt. WILLIAM DUNBAR."

"EDIN., *24th Aug.* 1787."

† The poem, afterwards published as "The humble Petition of Bruar Water to the noble Duke of Athole." See p. 111, *supra*.

endeavored to brush it up as well as Mr. N—'s chat, and the jogging of the chaise would allow. It eases my heart a good deal, as rhyme is the coin with which a poet pays his debts of honor or gratitude. What I owe to the noble family of Athole, of the first kind, I shall ever proudly boast; what I owe of the last, so help me God in my hour of need! I shall never forget.

The "little angel-band!" I declare I prayed for them very sincerely to-day at the Fall of Fyers. I shall never forget the fine family piece I saw at Blair: the amiable, the truly noble Duchess, with her smiling little seraph in her lap, at the head of the table: the lovely "olive plants," as the Hebrew bard finely says, round the happy mother: the beautiful Mrs. Grahame; the lovely, sweet Miss Cathcart, &c. I wish I had the powers of Guido to do them justice!* My Lord Duke's kind hospitality—markedly kind indeed. Mr. Graham of Fintray's charms of conversation: Sir W. Murray's friendship: in short, the recollection of all that polite, agreeable company, raises an honest glow in my bosom.

R. B.

Thursday [*6th Sep.*] Come over Culloden muir—reflections on the field of battle—breakfast at Kilraick†—old Mrs. Rose, sterling sense, warm heart, strong passion, honest pride, all in an uncommon degree—Mrs. Rose jun., a little milder than the mother; this perhaps owing to her being younger—Mr. Grant, minister at Calder, resembles Mr. Scott at Inverleithen

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* The Mrs. Grahame and Miss Cathcart whom the poet thus eulogises were daughters of Lord Cathcart, and sisters of the Duchess of Athole. The whole of these three fair sisters predeceased even our too short-lived poet. The portrait of Mrs. Grahame by Gainsborough, is now the admired specimen of that artist's work which adorns the walls of the Royal Scottish Academy at Edinburgh. Her husband, Thomas Grahame of Balgowan, distinguished himself as commander of the British troops at Barossa, and was raised to the peerage by the style of Lord Lynedoch. He survived till 1843, aged 94.

† This is the local diminutive of *Kilravock*, Inverness-shire.

—Mrs. Rose and Mr. Grant accompany us to Kildrummie—two young ladies, Miss Ross, who sang two Gaelic songs, beautiful and lovely; Miss Sophie Brodie, not very beautiful, but most agreeable and amiable—both of them the gentlest, mildest, sweetest creatures on earth, and happiness be with them!

Dine at Nairn—fall in with a pleasant enough gentleman, Dr. Stewart, who had been long abroad with his father in the *Forty-five;* and Mr. Falconer, a spare, irascible, warm-hearted Norland, and a non-juror—wastes of sand—Brodie House to lie. Mr. Brodie truly polite, but not just the Highland cordiality.

Friday [*7th Sep.*] Cross the Findhorn to Forres—Mr. Brodie tells me that the muir where Shakespeare lays Macbeth's witch-meeting is still so haunted, that the country folks won't pass it by night. Elgin to breakfast; meet with Mr. ——, Mr. Dunbar's friend, a pleasant sort of a man; can come no nearer. Venerable ruins of Elgin Abbey—A grander effect at first glance than Melrose, but nothing near so beautiful.

Cross Spey to Fochabers—fine palace, worthy of the generous proprietor—dine—company—Duke and Duchess, Ladies Charlotte and Madeline;* Colonel Abercrombie and Lady; Mr. Gordon, and Mr. ——, a clergyman, a venerable, aged figure, and Mr. Hoy, a clergyman, I suppose, a pleasant open manner. The Duke makes me happier than ever great man did—noble, princely; yet mild, condescending and affable, gay, and kind. The Duchess charming, witty, and sensible—God bless them! †

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* Lady Charlotte, then nineteen years old, afterwards became Duchess of Richmond. Lady Madeline married Sir Robert Sinclair of Murkle.

† Burns had been introduced to the Duchess of Gordon during the preceding winter; and presuming on this acquaintance, he proceeded to Gordon Castle, leaving Mr. Nicol at the Inn of Fochabers. At the castle he was received with the utmost hospitality and kindness, and the family being about to sit down to dinner, he was invited to take a place at table. This invitation he accepted; and after partaking a little and drinking a few glasses of wine, he intimated, that as a matter of necessity he must soon withdraw to join his fellow-traveller.

[*Friday night*, 7*th Sep.*] Sleep at Cullen. Hitherto the country is sadly poor and unimproven; the houses, crops, horses, cattle, &c., all in unison with their cart-wheels; and these are of low, coarse, unshod, clumsy work, with an axle-tree which had been made with other design than to be a resting shaft between the wheels.

[*Saturday*, 8*th Sep.*] Breakfasted at Banff—Improvements over this part of the country—Portsoy Bay—pleasant ride along the shore—country almost wild again between Banff and Newbyth; quite wild as we come through Buchan to Old Deer; but near the village both lands and crops rich—lie.

[*Sunday*, 9*th Sep.*] Set out for Peterhead. Near Peterhead come along the shore by the famous Bullars of Buchan, and Blain's Castle. The soil rich; crops of wheat, turnips, &c.; but no inclosing: soil rather light. Come to Ellon and dine—Lord Aberdeen's seat: entrance denied to everybody owing to the jealousy of threescore over a kept country-wench. Soil and improvements as before, till [*Sunday night*] we come to Aberdeen to lie.

[*Monday*, 10*th Sep.*] Meet with Mr. Chalmers, printer, a facetious fellow; Mr. Ross, a fine fellow, like Professor Tytler; Mr. Marshall, one of the *poetæ*

His noble host offered to send a servant to conduct Mr. Nicol to the castle, but Burns insisted on undertaking that office himself. A gentleman from the castle was sent on the part of the Duke, who delivered the invitation to Mr. Nicol in all the forms of politeness. The invitation came too late; the pride of the Schoolmaster had already been inflamed to a high pitch under the imagined neglect: he had ordered the horses to be put in the chaise, being determined to proceed on his journey alone; and they found him parading before the door of the inn venting his anger on the postilion for his slowness in executing his commands. Burns therefore seated himself beside Nicol in the post chaise, and turned his back on Castle Gordon, with mortification and regret. He afterwards wrote to Mr. Hoy, the Duke's librarian, in these terms:—"I shall certainly, among my legacies, leave my latest curse to that unlucky predicament which hurried—tore me away from Castle Gordon. May that obstinate son of Latin prose be curst to Scotch-mile periods, and damned to seven-league paragraphs; while Declension and Conjugation, Gender, Number, and Tense, under the ragged banners of Dissonance and Disarrangement, eternally rank against him in hostile array."

minores. Mr. Sheriffs, author of "Jamie and Bess," a little decrepid body, with some abilities. Bishop Skinner, a non-juror, son of the author of "Tullochgorum," a man whose mild venerable manner is the most marked of any in so young a man — Professor Gordon, a good-natured, jolly-looking professor—Aberdeen, a lazy town — near Stonehive, the coast a good deal romantic. Meet my relations.* Robert Burnes, Writer in Stonehive,† one of those who love fun, a gill, a punning joke, and have not a bad heart — his wife a sweet hospitable body, without any affectation of what is called town-breeding.

[*Tuesday, 11th Sep.*] Breakfast with Mr. Burnes—lie at Laurencekirk — Album — Library—Mrs. ——, a jolly, frank, sensible, love-inspiring widow—Howe of the Mearns, a rich, cultivated, but still uninclosed, country.

[*Wednesday, 12th Sep.*] Cross North Esk river and a rich country, to Craigow. Go to Montrose, that finely-situated handsome town. . . . . .

[*Thursday, 13th Sep.*] Leave Montrose—breakfast at Auchmuthie, and sail along that wild rocky coast and see the famous caverns, particularly the Gariepot.

(7) TO MR. JAMES BURNESS, WRITER, MONTROSE.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

TOWNFIELD, *six o'clock morning.*

MY DEAR COUSIN,—Mr. Nicol and Mr. Carnegie have taken some freak in their head, and have wakened me

* Here, by appointment, his cousin and correspondent, Mr. James Burness, joined him from Montrose.

† This "Robert Burnes," seems to have been an elder brother of John Burnes, the author of "Thrummy Cap," who was then a lad of sixteen.

just now with the rattling of the chaise to carry me to meet them at Craigie to go on our journey some other road, and breakfast by the way. I must go, which makes me very sorry. I beg my kindest, best compliments to your wife and all the good friends I saw yesternight. Write me to Edin^r^. in this week, with a direction for your nephew in Glasgow. Direct to me — care of Mr. Creech, Edin^r^. — I am ever, my dear Cousin,—Yours truly, ROB^T^. BURNS.

[MONTROSE, 13*th Sep.*] *

[*Thursday.*] Land, and dine at Arbroath—stately ruins of Arbroath Abbey—come to Dundee through a fertile country. Dundee, a low-lying but pleasant town—old steeple—Tayfirth—Broughty Castle, a finely situated ruin, jutting into the Tay.

[*Friday*, 14*th Sep.*] Breakfast with the Miss Scotts—Mr. Mitchell, an honest clergyman—Mr. Bruce another, but pleasant, agreeable and engaging; the first from Aberlemno, the second from Forfar. Dine with Mr. Anderson, a brother-in-law of Miss Scotts. Miss Bess Scott like Mrs. Greenfield—my bardship almost in love with her. Come through the rich harvests and fine hedge-rows of the carse of Gowrie, along the romantic margin of the Grampian Hills, to Perth——Castle Huntley—Sir Stewart Thriepland.

[*Saturday*, 15*th Sep.*] Perth—Scoon—picture of the Chevalier and his sister; Queen Mary's bed, the hangings wrought with her own hands—Fine, fruitful, hilly, woody country round Perth. Taybridge. Mr. and Mrs. Hastings—Major Scott—Castle Gowrie.

Leave Perth—come to Strathearn to Endermay to dine. Fine fruitful, cultivated strath—the scene of "Bessy Bell and Mary Gray," near Perth—fine scenery

* The original MS. is in the poet's Monument at Edinburgh. The date at bottom is in the handwriting of Mr. Burness.

on the banks of the May—Mrs. Belches, gawcie, frank, affable, fond of rural sports, hunting, &c. Mrs. Stirling, her sister, *en revue*. Come to Kinross to lie—reflections in a fit of the colic.

[*Sunday, 16th Sep.*] Come through a cold, barren country to Queensferry—dine—cross the ferry and come to Edinburgh.

TO MR. GILBERT BURNS, MOSSGIEL.

EDINBURGH, *17th Sept.* 1787.

MY DEAR SIR.*—I arrived here safe yesterday evening, after a tour of twenty-two days, and travelling near 600 miles, windings included. My farthest stretch was about ten miles beyond Inverness. I went thro' the heart of the Highlands by Crieff, Taymouth, the famous seat of Lord Breadalbane, down the Tay, among cascades and Druidical circle of stones, to Dunkeld, a seat of the Duke of Athole; thence across Tay, and up one of his tributary streams to Blair of Athole, another of the Duke's seats, where I had the honor of spending nearly two days† with his Grace and family: thence many miles through a wild country, among cliffs grey with eternal snows, and gloomy savage glens, till I crossed the Spey and went down the stream through Strathspey, so famous in Scottish music; Badenoch, &c. till I reached Grant Castle, where I spent half a day with Sir James Grant and family; and then crossed the country for Fort-George, but called by the way at Cawdor, the ancient seat of Macbeth; there I saw the identical bed in which tradition says King Duncan was murdered; lastly, from Fort-George to Inverness.

* This may appear a singular term for the poet to employ, in addressing his brother, but so it is in the MS.

† Part of Friday and whole of Saturday (Aug. 31, and Sep. 1.)

I returned by the coast, through Nairn, Forres, and so on, to Aberdeen, thence to Stonehive, where James Burness, from Montrose, met me by appointment. I spent two days among our relations, and found our aunts, Jean and Isabel, still alive, and hale old women.* John Caird, though born the same year with our father, walks as vigorously as I can: they have had several letters from his son in New York. William Brand is likewise a stout old fellow; but further particulars I delay till I see you, which will be in two or three weeks. The rest of my stages are not worth rehearsing; warm as I was from Ossian's country, where I had seen his very grave, what cared I for fishing-towns or fertile carses? I slept at the famous Brodie of Brodie's one night, and dined at Gordon Castle next day, with the Duke, Duchess, and family. I am thinking to cause my old mare to meet me, by means of John Ronald, at Glasgow; but you shall hear farther from me before I leave Edinburgh. My duty and many compliments from the north to my mother; and my brotherly compliments to the rest. I have been trying for a berth for William, but am not likely to be successful.—Farewell. R. B.

(8) TO MR. JAMES BURNESS, WRITER, MONTROSE.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

MY DEAR SIR,—I send you, along with this, nine copies† which you will transmit as marked on the blank leaves. The one to Lord Gardenstone you will transmit as soon as possible. Your hints about young Hudson I shall carefully remember when I call for him.

* See the Table at page 331, Vol. I.
† Of his printed Poems.

Any thing you send me, direct to the care of Mr. Andrew Bruce, Merch^t., Bridge Street, Edin., but I am afraid that your kind offer of the dry fish will cost more than they are worth to carriers. My compliments to your wife and all friends, and excuse this brevity in,—Yours ever, ROB^T. BURNS.*

EDIN., 19*th Sep.* 1787.

On 23d September the poet dispatched to Dr. Moore his celebrated Autobiographical letter. See Vol. 1, p. 332. It had been, as he explains, "unluckily forgot among other papers at Glasgow" on his way to Edinburgh, and was not recovered till his return from the great Highland Tour. About the same time, Burns received, by the hands of Dr. Blacklock, a letter from Mr. Josiah Walker, dated 13th September, in which he says,—"I still think with vexation on that ill-timed indisposition which lost me a day's enjoyment of a man possessed of those very dispositions and talents I most admire. . . . You know how anxious the Duke was to have another day of you, and to let Mr. Dundas have the pleasure of your conversation as the best dainty with which he could entertain an honored guest. . . . The Duchess would give any consideration for another sight of your letter to Dr. Moore; we must fall upon some method of procuring it for her."

Thus we see that Burns, by the excuse, real or pretended, of indisposition, broke away from Athole House on the Sunday morning. We fear that the temper of Nicol had something to do in that matter, as he could not well be employed in his angling sport on that day, and Burns might be afraid to risk his companion *in doors*. The poet very happily compared himself during that excursion to "a man travelling with a loaded blunderbuss at full cock."

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* The original MS. is preserved in the Poet's Monument at Edinburgh. Mr. Burness has appended the following note:—"The signature cut out by Mr. Burness and presented to the Hon. W^m. Maule of Panmure, 1821."

(1) TO PATRICK MILLER, ESQ., DALSWINTON.

(CHAMBERS' ED., 1852.)

EDINBURGH, 28*th September*, 1787.

SIR,—I have been on a tour through the Highlands, and arrived in town but the other day, so could not wait on you at Dalswinton about the latter end of August, as I had promised and intended.

Independent of any views of future connections, what I owe you for the past, as a friend and benefactor (when friends I had few, and benefactors I had none), strongly in my bosom prohibits the most distant instance of ungrateful disrespect. I am informed you do not come to town for a month still, and within that time I shall certainly wait on you, as by this time I suppose you will have settled your scheme with respect to your farms.

My journey through the Highlands was perfectly inspiring, and I hope I have laid in a good stock of new poetical ideas from it. I shall make no apology for sending you the enclosed: it is a small but grateful tribute to the memory of our common countryman.*—I have the honor to be, with the most grateful sincerity, Sir, your obliged humble servant,

ROBT. BURNS.

P.S.—I have added another poem, partly as it alludes to some folks nearly and dearly connected with Ayrshire, and partly as rhymes are the only coin in which the poor poet can pay his debts of gratitude. The lady alluded to is Miss Isabella M'Leod, aunt to the young Countess of Loudon.

As I am determined not to leave Edinburgh till I

* The Elegy on Sir James Hunter Blair. Mr. Miller's family (of Barskimming and Glenlee) belonged to Ayrshire.

wind up my matters with Mr. Creech, which I am afraid will be a tedious business, should I unfortunately miss you at Dalswinton, perhaps your factor will be able to inform me of your intentions with respect to Elesland farm, which will save me a jaunt to Edinburgh again.

There is something so suspicious in the profession of attachment from a little man to a great man, that I know not how to do justice to the grateful warmth of my heart, when I would say how truly I am interested in the welfare of your little troop of angels, and how much I have the honor to be again, Sir, your obliged humble servant, ROBT. BURNS.

EXCURSIONS IN OCTOBER 1787.

IN consequence of a slip in the memory of Dr. James M'Kittrick Adair, a young relative of Mrs. Dunlop to whom Burns was introduced in Edinburgh this autumn, great confusion has prevailed among the poet's biographers and annotators in their attempts to chronicle his various wanderings during the summer of 1787. Adair supplied Dr. Currie with a lively enough account of a journey he and Burns had together, specially to visit the conjoined families of Mr. John Tait, W.S., Mrs. Hamilton, and Mrs. Chalmers, at Harvieston; but he made the mistake of stating that the excursion was undertaken "in August 1787." The reader has been already made aware how Burns was engaged between the date of his arrival in Edinburgh on the 7th, and his leaving it in company with Nicol on the 25th of that month. It is evident from Dr. Adair's narrative that Burns had previously visited Harvieston; and it is equally apparent from the terms of the poet's letter to Gavin Hamilton, of 28th August 1787, that he had seen that gentleman's relatives there for the *first* time, on the 27th of that month.

As Dr. Adair's narrative must of necessity form a portion of the Biography of Burns, we here record it with some desirable abridgement:—"We rode by Linlithgow and Carron to Stirling. We visited the iron-works at Carron, with which the poet was forcibly struck. The resemblance between that

place and its inhabitants to the cave of the Cyclops, which must have occurred to every classical reader, presented itself to Burns. At Stirling the prospects from the Castle strongly interested him; his national feelings had, in a former visit, been powerfully excited by the ruinous and roofless state of the hall in which the Scottish Parliaments had frequently been held. His indignation had vented itself in some imprudent, but not unpoetical lines, which had given much offence, and which he took this opportunity of erasing, by breaking the pane of the window at the inn on which they were written.

"From Stirling we went next morning through the romantic and fertile vale of Devon to Harvieston, in Clackmannanshire, then inhabited by Mrs. Hamilton, with the younger part of whose family Burns had been previously acquainted. He introduced me to the family, and then was formed my first acquaintance with Mrs. Hamilton's eldest daughter to whom I have been married for nine years.* Thus was I indebted to Burns for a connexion from which I have derived, and expect further to derive, much happiness.

"During a residence of about ten days at Harvieston, we made excursions to various parts of the surrounding scenery, inferior to none in Scotland in beauty, sublimity, and romantic interest; particularly Castle Campbell, the ancient seat of the family of Argyll; and the famous cataract of the Devon, called the *Caldron-linn;* and the *Rumbling Bridge*, a single broad arch, thrown by the devil, if tradition is to be believed, across the river, at the height of about one hundred feet above its bed.

"A visit to Mrs. Bruce of Clackmannan, a lady above ninety, the lineal descendant of that race which gave the Scottish throne its brightest ornament, interested his feelings powerfully. This venerable dame, with characteristic dignity informed me on my observing that I believed she was descended from the family of Robert Bruce, that Robert Bruce was sprung from her family. Though almost deprived of speech by a paralytic affection, she preserved her hospitality and urbanity. She was in possession of the hero's helmet and two-handed sword, with which she conferred on Burns and myself the honor of knighthood, remarking that she had a

* Marriage—16th November 1789. At Harvieston, Dr. James M'Kitrick Adair, to Miss Charlotte Hamilton. Dr. Adair died at Harrowgate in 1802, and his widow in 1806.

better right to confer that title than *some people*.* You will of course conclude that the old lady's political tenets were as Jacobital as the poet's, a conformity which contributed not a little to the cordiality of our reception and entertainment. She gave us her first toast after dinner, "Awa' Uncos," or Away with the Strangers! Who these strangers were, you will readily understand.

"At Dunfermline we visited the ruined abbey, and the abbey church, now consecrated to Presbyterian worship. Here I mounted the cutty stool, or stool of repentance, assuming the character of a penitent for fornication; while Burns, from the pulpit addressed to me a ludicrous reproof and exhortation, parodied from that which had been delivered to himself in Ayrshire, where he had, as he assured me, once been one of seven who mounted the *seat of shame* together.

"In the church, two broad flag-stones marked the grave of Robert Bruce for whose memory Burns had more than common veneration. He knelt and kissed the stone with sacred fervor, and heartily (*suus ut mos erat*) execrated the worse than Gothic neglect of the first of Scottish heroes."

Dr. Adair makes no reference to two little excursions which Burns performed on his own account at this period, while Harvieston formed his head-quarters. A forenoon's ride would bring him to the Tusculum of Mr. J. Ramsay of Auchtertyre on the Teith, to whom he carried a letter of introduction from Dr. Blacklock. After a short visit to that gentleman, he departed under the promise to return in a few days and make a longer stay. The poet then proceeded to Ochtertyre in Strathearn, to accomplish a pre-concerted visit to Sir William Murray, whom he had met at Athole House. It was during his stay as guest of Sir William that he composed the fine verses "On scaring some water-fowl in Loch Turrit," and there also he produced the admired song "Blythe, blythe, and merry was she," † in compliment to Miss Euphemia Murray of Lintrose, a young cousin of his host, who then lived at Ochtertyre House. He addressed a letter to each of his two friends, the classical teachers of the High School, from this beautiful retreat, both bearing the same date.

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* This old lady lived in the ancient and now ruined fortalice called "Clackmannan Tower," overlooking the Firth of Forth at Alloa. She died in 1791, and the sword and helmet of Bruce fell appropriately into the hands of her kinsman, the Earl of Elgin, at whose mansion of Broomhall they are now preserved.

† Marriage—"Aug. 2, 1794. At Lintrose, the Hon. David Smyth of Methven, one of the Senators of the College of Justice, to Miss Euphemia Murray, daughter of Mungo Murray, Esq., of Lintrose."—*Scots Mag.*

(3) TO MR. WILLIAM NICOL, EDINBURGH.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

OCHTERTYRE, *Monday* [*Oct.* 15*th*, 1787.]

MY DEAR SIR,—I find myself very comfortable here, neither oppressed by ceremony nor mortified by neglect. Lady Augusta is a most engaging woman, and very happy in her family, which makes one's outgoings and incomings very agreeable. I called at Mr. Ramsay's of Auchtertyre as I came up the country, and am so delighted with him, that I shall certainly accept of his invitation to spend a day or two with him as I return. I leave this place on Wednesday or Thursday.

Make my compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Cruickshank, and Mrs. Nicol, if she is returned. I am ever, dear Sir, your deeply indebted, R. B.

(1) MR. WILLIAM CRUICKSHANK, EDINBURGH.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

OCHTERTYRE, *Monday* [*Oct.* 15*th*, 1787.]

I HAVE nothing, my dear Sir, to write to you, but that I feel myself exceedingly comfortably situated in this good family—just notice enough to make me easy but not to embarrass me. I was storm-stayed two days at the foot of the Ochil Hills, with Mr. Tait of Harvieston and Mr. Johnston of Alva; but was so well pleased that I shall certainly spend a day on the banks of the Devon as I return. I leave this place, I suppose, on Wednesday, and shall devote a day to Mr. Ramsay of Auchtertyre near Stirling—a man to whose worth I cannot do justice. My respectful kind

compliments to Mrs. Cruickshank, and my dear little Jeanie; and if you see Mr. Masterton, please remember me to him. I am ever, my dear Sir, &c.

R. B.

After eight or ten luxurious days thus enjoyed in high society, amid scenery of the most inviting kind, the poet proceeded to fulfill his promise made to Mr. Ramsay, taking Harvieston by the way; for the attractions there—as shall afterwards appear—were more powerful than he cared to express. Tearing himself away, as we may suppose, from his interesting entertainers on the banks of the Devon, he made his way to the beautiful retreat of his lately acquired friend on the banks of the Teith. That gentleman, according to Mr. Lockhart, was "among the last of that old Scottish line of Latinists, which began with Buchanan, and (I fear) may be said to have ended with Gregory. Mr. Ramsay, among other eccentricities, had sprinkled the walls of his house with Latin inscriptions, some of them highly elegant, and these particularly interested Burns, who asked and obtained copies and translations of them. This amiable man (whose manners and residence were not, I take it, out of the novelist's recollection, when he painted 'Monkbarns,') was deeply read in Scottish antiquities, and the author of some learned essays on the elder poetry of his country. His conversation must have delighted any man of talents; and Burns and he were mutually charmed with each other." *

"When I asked him," wrote Mr. Ramsay to Dr. Currie, "whether the Edinburgh *literati* had mended his poems by their criticisms—'Sir,' said he, 'those gentlemen remind me of some spinsters in my country who spin their thread so fine that it is fit for neither weft nor woof!' . . . I have been in the company of many men of genius, some of them poets; but I never witnessed such flashes of intellectual brightness as from him, the impulse of the moment, sparks of celestial fire! I was never more delighted than with his company, two days tête-a-tête on this occasion."

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* "March 2nd, 1814.—Died John Ramsay of Auchtertyre"—*Scots Mag.* The Latin inscription above the door of his house, written in 1775, thus reads in English "On the banks of the Teith, in the small but sweet inheritance of my fathers, may I and mine live in peace, and die in joyful hope!" The little estate passed into the hands of Sir David Dundas, Q.C. whose death occurred on 30th March, 1877.

From the letter which follows we learn that Burns arrived in Edinburgh after his little tour, on 20th October, ill with a cold contracted during the journey.

(2) TO PATRICK MILLER, ESQ., DALSWINTON.

(CHAMBERS, 1851.)

EDINBURGH, *20th October* 1787.

SIR,—I was spending a few days at Sir William Murray's, Ochtertyre, and did not get your obliging letter till to-day I came to town. I was still more unlucky in catching a miserable cold, for which the medical gentlemen have ordered me into close confinement, "under pain of death"—the severest of penalties. In two or three days, if I get better, and if I hear at your lodgings that you are still at Dalswinton, I will take a ride to Dumfries directly. From something in your last, I would wish to explain my idea of being your tenant. I want to be a farmer in a small farm, about a plough-gang, in a pleasant country, under the auspices of a good landlord. I have no foolish notion of being a tenant on easier terms than another. To find a farm where one can live at all is not easy—I only mean living soberly, like an old-style farmer, and joining personal industry. The banks of the Nith are as sweet poetic ground as any I ever saw; and besides, Sir, 'tis but justice to the feelings of my own heart, and the opinion of my best friends, to say that I would wish to call you landlord sooner than any landed gentleman I know. These are my views and wishes; and in whatever way you think best to lay out your farms, I shall be happy to rent one of them. I shall certainly be able to ride to Dalswinton about the middle of next week, if I hear that you are not gone,—I have the honor to be, Sir,—Your obliged humble servant,

ROBT. BURNS.

The poet's lodging in Edinburgh was now in St. James's Square, in the house of Nicol's High School colleague, Mr. William Cruickshank; and there he resided throughout his second winter in the city. His time was now much occupied in preparing songs for Vol. II. of Johnson's Museum, which appeared about the middle of February following. The following incident related by Professor Walker in his Memoir of Burns, refers to this period:—"About the end of October, I called for him at the house of a friend, whose daughter, though not more than twelve, was a considerable proficient in music. I found him seated by the harpsichord of this young lady, listening with the keenest interest to his own verses, which she sung and accompanied, and adjusting them to the music by repeated trials of the effect. In this occupation he was so totally absorbed, that it was difficult to draw his attention from it for a moment." The letter which follows, addressed to Mr. Hoy, the Duke of Gordon's Librarian (referred to in the journal of the Highland Tour), is another illustration of his eagerness to help Johnson's musical work.

(1) TO JAMES HOY, ESQ., GORDON CASTLE.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

EDINBURGH, *20th October* 1787.

SIR,—I will defend my conduct in giving you this trouble, on the best of Christian principles,—"Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." I shall certainly, among my legacies, leave my latest curse to that unlucky predicament which hurried—tore me away from Castle Gordon. May that obstinate son of Latin prose be curst to Scotch-mile periods, and damned to seven-leagued paragraphs; while Declension and Conjugation, Gender, Number, and Tense, under the ragged banners of Dissonance and Disarrangement, eternally rank against him in hostile array.

Allow me, Sir, to strengthen the small claim I have to your acquaintance, by the following request. An

engraver, James Johnson, in Edinburgh, has, not from mercenary views, but from an honest Scotch enthusiasm, set about collecting all our native songs and setting them to music; particularly those that have never been set before. Clarke, the well-known musician, presides over the musical arrangement, and Drs. Beattie and Blacklock, Mr. Tytler of Woodhouselee, and your humble servant to the utmost of his small power, assist in collecting the old poetry, or sometimes for a fine air make a stanza, when it has no words. The brats (too tedious to mention) which claim a parental pang from my bardship, I suppose will appear in Johnson's second number — the first was published before my acquaintance with him. My request is— "Cauld Kail in Aberdeen" is one intended for this number, and I beg a copy of his Grace of Gordon's words to it, which you were so kind as to repeat to me. You may be sure we won't prefix the author's name, except you like, though I look on it as no small merit to this work that the names of so many of the authors of our old Scotch songs, names almost forgotten, will be inserted. I do not well know where to write to you — I rather write at you: but if you will be so obliging, immediately on receipt of this, as to write me a few lines I shall perhaps pay you in kind, though not in quality. Johnson's terms are:— each number a handsome pocket volume, to consist of a hundred Scotch songs, with basses for the harpsichord, &c. The price to subscribers, 5*s.*; to non-subscribers, 6*s.* He will have three numbers, I conjecture.

My direction, for two or three weeks, will be at Mr. William Cruickshank's, St. James's Square, New Town, Edinburgh,—I am, Sir, yours to command,

R. B.

(1) TO REV. JOHN SKINNER.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

EDINBURGH, *October* 25, 1787.

REVEREND AND VENERABLE SIR,—Accept, in plain dull prose, my most sincere thanks for the best poetical compliment I ever received. I assure you, Sir, as a poet, you have conjured up an airy demon of vanity in my fancy, which the best abilities in your other capacity would be ill able to lay. I regret, and while I live I shall regret, that when I was in the north, I had not the pleasure of paying a younger brother's dutiful respects to the author of the best Scotch song ever Scotland saw—"Tullochgorum's my delight!" The world may think slightingly of the craft of song-making if they please, but, as Job says—"O that mine adversary had written a book!"—let them try. There is a certain something in the old Scotch songs, a wild happiness of thought and expression, which peculiarly marks them not only from English songs, but also from the modern efforts of song-wrights, in our native manner and language. The only remains of this enchantment, these spells of the imagination, rest with you. Our true brother, Ross of Lochlee, was likewise "owre cannie"—"a wild warlock"—but now he sings among the "sons of the morning."

I have often wished, and will certainly endeavor to form a kind of common acquaintance among all the genuine sons of Caledonian song. The world, busy in low prosaic pursuits, may overlook most of us; but "reverence thyself." The world is not our *peers*, so we challenge the jury. We can lash that world, and find ourselves a very great source of amusement and happiness independent of that world.

There is a work going on in Edinburgh just now which claims your best assistance. An engraver in this town has set about collecting and publishing all the Scotch songs, with the music, that can be found. Songs in the English language, if by Scotchmen, are admitted, but the music must all be Scotch. Drs. Beattie and Blacklock are lending a hand, and the first musician in the town presides over that department. I have been absolutely crazed about it, collecting old stanzas, and every information remaining respecting their origin, authors, &c., &c. This last is but a very fragment-business; but at the end of his second number—the first is already published—a small account will be given of the authors, particularly to preserve those of later times. Your three songs "Tullochgorum," "John of Badenyon," and "Ewie wi' the Crookit Horn," go into this second number. I was determined, before I got your letter, to write you, begging that you would let me know where the editions of these pieces may be found, as you would wish them to continue in future times; and if you be so kind to this undertaking as send any songs, of your own or others, that you would think proper to publish, your name will be inserted among the other authors,—"Nill ye, will ye." One half of Scotland already give your songs to other authors. Paper is done. I beg to hear from you; the sooner the better, as I leave Edinburgh in a fortnight or three weeks—I am, with the warmest sincerity, Sir,—You obliged humble servant, R. B.

The poetical compliment referred to in the opening sentence of the preceding letter was dated Linshart, 25th Sep., 1787, and consisted of eighteen stanzas and a "Postscript" in Scotch verse, which the worthy clergyman had penned after hearing from his son in Aberdeen that he had met with Burns at the house of Mr. Chalmers, printer there, on 10th

September. We shall quote only one stanza, as the piece is well known :—

> "Sae proud's I am that ye hae heard
> O' my attempts to be a bard,
> And think my muse nae that ill-faur'd,
> Seil o' your face!
> I wadna wish for mair reward,
> Than your good grace."

The next of the bard's letters in our programme bears date "September" in *Cromek's Reliques*, through some mistake; but our date by internal evidence, must be the true one. It is the first that has been preserved of an extensive series of such interesting communications addressed by Burns to Miss Margaret, or rather, "Peggy" Chalmers, as he preferred to call her. The familiar style of this letter goes far to prove that it was not the beginning of such correspondence; and the reference to *Smeaton of Kilmaurs*, and to a "Mauchline sacrament" very significantly indicates that his correspondent was familiar with those localities and their peculiarities. (*See* letter to James Smith, p. 315 *supra*.) In thus addressing Miss Chalmers the poet writes as if his letters were intended for Charlotte Hamilton's, as much as for Peggy's perusal, writing to the latter individually as a matter of form, as if she were merely secretary of the Harvieston sisterhood. But a close observer will detect in these letters that Peggy has the soft side of his heart; while his admiration for Charlotte is (to use his own simile) of that kind "with which one regards the starry sky in a frosty December." There is not a trace of his great ruling passion in the *one* song he composed in honor of Charlotte; while the "native grace" and "immortal charms" of Peggy are set off in his happiest manner in the three lyrics dedicated to her.

(1) TO MISS CHALMERS, HARVIESTON.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

EDINB. *Oct.* 26, 1787.

I SEND Charlotte the first number of the songs; I would not wait for the second number; I hate delays in little marks of friendship, as I hate dissimulation in the language of the heart. I am determined to

pay Charlotte a poetic compliment, if I could hit on some glorious old Scotch air, in number second. You will see a small attempt on a shred of paper in the book; but though Dr. Blacklock commended it very highly, I am not just satisfied with it myself. I intend to make it *description* of some kind: the whining cant of love, except in real passion, and by a masterly hand, is to me as insufferable as the preaching cant of old Father Smeaton, Whig-minister at Kilmaurs. Darts, flames, cupids, loves, graces, and all that farrago, are just a Mauchline sacrament—a senseless rabble.

I got an excellent poetic epistle yesternight from the old, venerable author of Tullochgorum, John of Badenyon, &c. I suppose you know he is a clergyman. It is by far the finest poetic compliment I ever got. I will send you a copy of it.

I go on Thursday or Friday to Dumfries to wait on Mr. Miller about his farms.—Do tell that to Lady Mackenzie, that she may give me credit for a little wisdom. "I Wisdom dwell with Prudence." What a blessed fire-side! How happy should I be to pass a winter evening under their venerable roof! and smoke a pipe of tobacco, or drink water-gruel with them! What solemn, lengthened, laughter-quashing gravity of phiz! What sage remarks on the good-for-nothing sons and daughters of indiscretion and folly! And what frugal lessons, as we straitened the fire-side circle, on the uses of the poker and tongs!

Miss Nimmo is very well, and begs to be remembered in the old way to you. I used all my eloquence, all the persuasive flourishes of the hand, and heart-melting modulation of periods in my power, to urge her out to Harvieston, but all in vain. My rhetoric seems quite to have lost its effect on the lovely half of mankind. I have seen the day—but that is a "tale of other years."—In my conscience I believe

that my heart has been so oft on fire that it is absolutely vitrified. I look on the sex with something like the admiration with which I regard the starry sky in a frosty December night. I admire the beauty of the Creator's workmanship; I am charmed with the wild but grateful eccentricity of their motions, and—wish them good night. I mean this with respect to a certain passion *dont j'ai eu l'honneur d'être un miserable esclave:* as for friendship, you and Charlotte have given me pleasure, permanent pleasure "which the world cannot give, nor take away," I hope; and which will outlast the heavens and the earth. R. B.

(2) TO MR. JAMES CANDLISH, GLASGOW.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

EDINBURGH, *Nov.* 1787.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—If once I were gone from this scene of hurry and dissipation, I promise myself the pleasure of that correspondence being renewed which has been so long broken. At present I have time for nothing. Dissipation and business engross every moment. I am engaged in assisting an honest Scotch enthusiast, a friend of mine, who is an engraver, and has taken it into his head to publish a collection of all our songs set to music, of which the words and music are done by Scotsmen. This, you will easily guess, is an undertaking exactly to my taste. I have collected, begged, borrowed, and stolen, all the songs I could meet with. "Pompey's Ghost," words and music, I beg from you immediately, to go into his second number: the first is already published. I shall shew you the first number when I see you in Glasgow, which will be in a fortnight or less. Do be so

kind as to send me the song in a day or two: you cannot imagine how much it will oblige me.

Direct to me at Mr. W. Cruickshank's, St. James's Square, New Town, Edinburgh.

ROBT. BURNS.

The above letter we have every confidence in dating as above, from internal evidence, although the original is undated, and Chambers has placed it under February 1788. The song requested by Burns from his correspondent was apparently one which the latter used to sing while both were attending the Grammar School at Ayr, under John Murdoch in 1773, when neither of them were above fifteen years old. Burns had been led to believe that its author was John Lowe, the composer of "Mary's Dream;" but as we find the words in print at a period when Lowe was only emerging from boyhood, the claim of the latter to its authorship must be denied. Lowe was born in 1750, and died in 1798. He went to Edinburgh to attend the University in 1771, when he would find the piece called "Pompey's Ghost" in a standard collection styled "THE BLACKBIRD," edited by William Hunter, and bearing this imprint:—"Edinburgh. Printed by J. Bruce and Company: and sold by John Moir, Bookbinder in Bell's Wynd. —MDCCLXIV."

Mr. Candlish forwarded the words to Burns in reply, but regretted his inability to note down the music. He wrote thus:—"It is with the greatest sincerity I applaud your attempt to give the world a more correct and elegant collection of Scotch songs than has hitherto appeared . . . . If it is to be published by subscription, put down my name for a copy. My time this winter is very much employed—no less than ten hours a day. Expecting to see you soon, I am yours most sincerely JAMES CANDLISH."

About this period, Burns received a letter from his old preceptor John Murdoch, dated from London on 28th October 1787. The poems of Robert Burns had been for some months the subject of admiration in London, before the worthy man could realize the fact that these were actually the work of the poor boy of that name who had been his pupil at Mount Oliphant. He wrote thus:—"If ever you come hither, you will have the satisfaction of seeing your poems relished by the Caledonians in London fully as much as they can be by

those of Edinburgh. We frequently repeat some of your verses in our Caledonian Society; and you may believe that I am not a little vain that I have had some share in cultivating such a genius. I was not absolutely certain that you were the author till a few days ago, when I made a visit to a Scotch lady resident here, a daughter of Dr. M'Comb, who told me that she was informed of it by a letter from her sister in Edinburgh, with whom you had been in company when in that capital. . . .

"May the father of the Universe bless you with all those principles and dispositions that the best of parents took such uncommon pains to instil into your mind from your earliest infancy! It is one of the greatest pleasures I promise myself before I die, that of seeing the family of a man whose memory I revere more than that of any person that ever I was acquainted with.—I am, my dear friend, yours sincerely.

JOHN MURDOCK."

Another Scotchman resident in London, Sir Gilbert Elliot (afterwards the first Earl of Minto), about this time wrote to his sister at Minto, on the same subject, thus:—"I have read about half of Burns's Poems, and am in the highest degree of admiration. I admire and wonder at his general knowledge of human character—of the manner, merits, and defects, of all ranks, and of many countries; the great justness, and also the great liberality of his judgment; and (what is most to be stared at) the uncommon refinement of his mind in all his views and opinions, and the uncommon refinement of his taste in composition. This, I say, seems more wonderful than genius, because one is apt to suppose Genius is *born* and Refinement is *acquired*. Now, granting his access to good books, yet consider the company he has lived in, and in how much worse than total solitude his mind has had to work and purify itself; consider how severe labor blunts the edge of every mind, and how the discomforts of poverty in a Scotch climate must cripple even Genius, and what a sedative it must be to imagination—nay, how much nearer even the *pleasures* of his rank must lead to sottishness than to elegance and wit! Thus we see what a victory mind has over matter, and how, in this prodigy, Will has dung Fate!"—*Life and letters of Sir Gilbert Elliot*, 1874.

(6) TO MRS. DUNLOP OF DUNLOP,

DUNLOP HOUSE, STEWARTON.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)*

MADAM,—I will bear the reproaches of my conscience respecting this letter no longer. I was indebted to you some time ago for a kind, long letter (your letters the longer the better), and again the other day I heard from you, enclosing a very friendly letter from Dr. Moore. I thought with myself, in the height of my gratitude and pride, of my remark that I would sit down some hour of inspiration, and write you a letter, at least worth twa groats; consequently you would have been a great gainer, as you are so benevolent as to bestow your epistolary correspondence on me (I am sure) without the least idea of being paid *in kind.*

When you talk of correspondence and friendship to me, Madam, you do me too much honor; but, as I shall soon be at my wonted leisure and rural occupation, if any remark on what I have read or seen, or any new rhyme I may twist, that is worth while—if such a letter, Madam, can give a person of your rank, information, and abilities any entertainment, you shall have it with all my heart and soul.

It requires no common exertion of good sense and philosophy in persons of elevated rank, to keep a friendship properly alive with one much their inferior. Externals, things totally extraneous of the man, steal upon the hearts and judgments of almost, if not altogether, all mankind; nor do I know more than one instance of a man who fully and truly regards "all the world as a stage, and all the men and women

* From the poet's holograph in possession of Frederick Locker, Esq., London.

merely players," and who (the dancing-school bow excepted) only values these players—the *dramatis personæ*, who build cities, and who rear hedges; who govern provinces, or superintend flocks, merely as they *act their parts.* For the honor of Ayrshire, this man is Professor Dugald Stewart of Catrine. To him I might perhaps add another instance, a Popish Bishop, Geddes;* but I have outraged that gloomy, fiery Presbyterianism enough already, though I don't spit in her lugubrious face by telling her that the first Cleric character I ever saw was a Roman Catholic.

I ever could ill endure those surly cubs of "chassard old night"—those ghostly beasts of prey who foul the hallowed ground of Religion with their nocturnal prowlings; but if the prosecution which I hear the Erebean fanatics are projecting against my learned and truly worthy friend, Dr. M'Gill,† goes on, I shall keep no measure with the savages, but fly at them with the *faucons* of Ridicule, or run them down with the bloodhounds of Satire, as lawful game wherever I start them.

I expect to leave Edin^r^. in eight or ten days, and shall certainly do myself the honor of calling at Dunlop House as I return to Ayrshire.—I have the honor to be, Madam, your obliged humble servant,

ROB^T^. BURNS.

EDIN^R^. *4th Nov.* 1787.

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* This was Dr. John Geddes, coadjutor Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church in Edinburgh, who had procured subscriptions for the author's Edinburgh edition from five foreign Catholic seminaries, beginning with the Scots College at Valladolid, of which he had been for many years Rector. He had been introduced to Burns by Lord Monboddo.

† This is the first we hear of the poet's interest in the ecclesiastical prosecution of Dr. M'Gill, for alleged heresy, which afterwards occasioned the poem called "the Kirk's Alarm."

(2) TO JAMES HOY, ESQ., GORDON CASTLE.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

EDINBURGH, *6th November*, 1787.

DEAR SIR,—I would have wrote you immediately on receipt of your kind letter, but a mixed impulse of gratitude and esteem whispered to me that I ought to send you something by way of return. When a poet owes anything, particularly when he is indebted for good offices, the payment that usually recurs to him—the only coin indeed in which he probably is conversant—is rhyme. Johnson sends the books by the fly, as directed, and begs me to enclose his most grateful thanks: my return I intended should have been one or two poetic bagatelles which the world have not seen, or, perhaps, for obvious reasons, cannot see. These I shall send you before I leave Edinburgh. They may make you laugh a little, which, on the whole, is no bad way of spending one's precious hours and still more precious breath: at any rate, they will be, though a small, yet a very sincere mark of my respectful esteem for a gentleman whose further acquaintance I should look upon as a peculiar obligation.

The Duke's song, independent totally of his dukeship, charms me. There is I know not what of wild happiness of thought and expression peculiarly beautiful in the old Scottish song style, of which his Grace, old venerable Skinner, the author of "Tullochgorum," &c., and the late Ross, at Lochlee, of true Scottish poetic memory, are the only modern instances that I recollect, since Ramsay with his contemporaries, and poor Bob Fergusson went to the world of deathless existence and truly immortal song. The mob of mankind, that many-headed beast, would laugh at so serious a speech about an old song; but, as Job says,

"O that mine adversary had written a book!" Those who think that composing a Scotch song is a trifling business—let them try it.

I wish my Lord Duke would pay a proper attention to the Christian admonition —"Hide not your candle under a bushel," but "let your light shine before men." I could name half a dozen dukes that I guess are a devilish deal worse employed: nay, I question if there are half a dozen better: perhaps there are not half that scanty number whom Heaven has favored with the tuneful, happy, and, I will say, glorious gift. —I am, dear Sir,—Your obliged humble servant,

R. B.

(2) TO MISS CHALMERS, HARVIESTON.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

EDINR. *6th Nov.* 1787.

MY DEAR MADAM,—I just now have read yours. The poetic compliments I pay cannot be misunderstood. They are neither of them so particular as to point you out to the world at large; and the circle of your acquaintances will allow all I have said. Besides, I have complimented you chiefly, almost solely, on your mental charms. Shall I be plain with you? I will; so look to it. Personal attractions, Madam, you have much above par; wit, understanding, and worth, you possess in the first class. This is a cursed flat way of telling you these truths, but let me hear no more of your sheepish timidity. I know the world a little. I know what they will say of my poems (by second sight, I suppose, for I am seldom out in my conjectures); and you may believe me, my dear Madam, I would not run any risk of hurting you by an ill-judged compliment. I wish to show to the world, the odds between a poet's friends and those of simple

prosemen. More for your information, *both* the pieces go in. One of them, "Where braving angry winter's storms," is already set—the tune is Neil Gow's lamentation for Abercarny; the other is to be set to an old Highland air in Daniel Dow's "Collection of ancient Scotch music;" the name is *Ha a Chaillich air mo Dheidh.* My treacherous memory has forgot every circumstance about *Les Incas*, only I think you mentioned them as being in Creech's possession. I shall ask him about it. I am afraid the song of "Somebody" will come too late—as I shall, for certain, leave town in a week for Ayrshire, and from that to Dumfries, but there my hopes are slender. I leave my direction in town, so any thing, wherever I am, will reach me.

I saw your's to ——; it is not too severe, nor did he take it amiss. On the contrary, like a whipt spaniel he talks of being with you in the Christmas days. Mr. Tait has given him the invitation, and he is determined to accept of it. O selfishness! he owns in his sober moments, that from his own volatility of inclination, the circumstances in which he is situated, and his knowledge of his father's disposition, the whole affair is chimerical—yet he *will* gratify an idle *penchant* at the enormous, cruel expense of perhaps ruining the peace of the very woman for whom he professes the generous passion of love! He is a gentleman in his mind and manners—*tant pis!* He is a volatile school-boy: the heir of a man's fortune who well knows the value of two times two!

Perdition seize them and their fortunes, before they should make the amiable, the lovely —— the derided object of their purse-proud contempt.

I am doubly happy to hear of Mrs. ——'s recovery, because I really thought all was over with her. There are days of pleasure yet awaiting her.

"As I cam in by Glenap;
I met with an aged woman;
She bade me cheer up my heart,
For the best o' my days was comin."*

This day will decide my affairs with Creech. Things are, like myself, not what they ought to be; yet better than what they appear to be.

"Heaven's Sovereign saves all beings but Himself—
That hideous sight—a naked human heart."

Farewell! remember me to Charlotte. R. B.

After the first week in November had passed, the poet seems to have made a second journey to Dumfriesshire to inspect Mr. Miller's farms, taking Ayrshire by the way. He mentions his return in the following letter to Miss Chalmers, which has no date attached to it in Cromek's Collection, where it first appeared. He was back to Edinburgh about the 17th of same month.

(3) TO MISS CHALMERS, HARVIESTON.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

EDIN., (*Nov.* 18,) 1787.

I HAVE been at Dumfries, and at one visit more shall be decided about a farm in that country. I am rather hopeless in it; but as my brother is an excellent farmer, and is, besides, an exceedingly prudent, sober man (qualities which are only a younger brother's fortune in our family), I am determined, if my Dumfries business fail me, to return into partnership with him, and at our leisure take another farm in the neighborhood. I assure you I look for high compliments from you and Charlotte on this very sage instance of my unfathomable, incomprehensible wisdom. Talking of Charlotte, I must tell her that I have, to the best of my power, paid her a poetic compliment, now com-

* Here the letter closes in Cromek's copy. The remainder first appeared in Cunningham's edition.

pleted.* The air is admirable: true old Highland. It was the tune of a Gaelic song which an Inverness lady sung me when I was there; and I was so charmed with it that I begged her to write me a set of it from her singing; for it had never been set before. I am fixed that it shall go into Johnson's next number; so Charlotte and you need not spend your precious time in contradicting me. I won't say the poetry is first-rate; though I am convinced it is very well: and, what is not always the case with compliments to ladies, it is not only *sincere*, but *just*. R. B.

(4) TO MISS CHALMERS, HARVIESTON.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

EDIN., *Nov.* 21, 1787.

I HAVE one vexatious fault to the kindly-welcome, well-filled sheet which I owe to your and Charlotte's goodness—it contains too much sense, sentiment, and good-spelling. It is impossible that even you two, whom I declare to my God I will give credit for any degree of excellence the sex are capable of attaining, it is impossible you can go on to correspond at that rate; so like those who, Shenstone says, retire because they have made a good speech, I shall, after a few letters, hear no more of you. I insist that you shall write whatever comes first: what you see, what you read, what you hear, what you admire, what you dislike, trifles, bagatelles, nonsense; or to fill up a corner, e'en put down a laugh at full length. Now none of your polite hints about flattery: I leave that to your lovers, if you have or shall have any; though, thank heaven, I have found at last two girls who can be luxuriantly happy in their own minds and with one another, without that commonly necessary appendage to female bliss, A LOVER.

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* See "The Banks of the Devon," *supra*, p. 129.

Charlotte and you are just two favorite resting-places for my soul in her wanderings through the weary, thorny wilderness of this world—God knows I am ill-fitted for the struggle: I glory in being a Poet, and I want to be thought a wise man—I would fondly be generous, and I wish to be rich. After all, I am afraid I am a lost subject. "Some folk hae a hantle o' fauts, an' I'm but a ne'er-do-weel."

Afternoon.—To close the melancholy reflections at the end of last sheet, I shall just add a piece of devotion commonly known in Carrick by the title of the "Wabster's grace:"

> "Some say we're thieves, and e'en sae are we!
> Some say we lie, and e'en sae do we!
> Gude forgie us, and I hope sae will He!
> Up and to your looms, lads."

R. B.

TO MR. ROBT. AINSLIE, ST. JAMES' SQUARE.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

SUNDAY MORNING, *Nov.* 25, 1787.*

I BEG, my dear Sir, you will not make any appointment to take us to Mr. Ainslie's † to-night. On looking over my engagements, constitution, present state of my health, some little vexatious soul concerns, &c., I find I can't sup abroad to-night. I shall be in to-day till one o'clock, if you have a leisure hour.

You will think it romantic when I tell you, that I find the idea of your friendship almost necessary to my existence.—You assume a proper length of face in my bitter hours of blue-devilism, and you laugh fully up to my highest wishes at my good things. I don't know, upon the whole, if you are one of the

* The poet's MS. of this note is in the possession of Frederick Locker, Esq., author of "London Lyrics," &c.

† This was Mr. Ainslie, Bookseller, a relative of Burns's correspondent.

first fellows in God's world, but you are so to me. I tell you this just now, in the conviction that some inequalities in my temper and manner may perhaps sometimes make you suspect that I am not so warmly as I ought to be your friend, R. B.

(1) TO MR. BEUGO, ENGRAVER, PRINCES STREET.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

MY DEAR SIR,—A certain sour-faced old acquaintance called "Glauber's Salts" hinders me from my lesson to-night. To-morrow night I will not fail.

ROBT. BURNS.

ST. JAMES' SQUARE, *Tuesday Even.*

The original of the above little note is possessed by W. F. Watson, Esq., Edinburgh, who supposes that the date might be about March 1787, when Burns gave Beugo a few sittings while the engraving of his portrait was in progress. The address "St. James' Square," however, would imply a date considerably later; we suspect that he and Beugo had arranged to take an evening lesson together in Latin or French —most probably the latter, from Mr. Louis Cauvin, who resided near Jock's Lodge, and had a class-room in the city.

In regard to the short letter to Ainslie, the following extract from a communication which that gentleman addressed to the Ettrick Shepherd in 1834 will afford a full explanation:— "While the Poet was staying with Mr. Cruickshank in St. James' Square, I had then a small bachelor-house on the north side of the Square, and, intimate as we were, it may be supposed we spent many an hour together, and to me most agreeable they were. I remember one pleasant afternoon he came over to me after dinner: I was then but a Writer to the Signet's apprentice, but had already a cellar, though certainly not an extensive one; for it was no more than a window-bunker, and consisted but of five bottles of port—all that remained of a dozen which had been my last laid-in store. I was too hospitable not to offer a bottle to my friend—'No, no,' said Burns, giving me a kindly slap on the shoulder, 'we'll hae nae wine the day; we'll take a walk to Arthur Seat, and come in to a late tea.' We did so, and I almost

never found the poet so amusing, so instructive, and altogether so delightful, as he was in the charming stroll which we had together, and during the sober tea-drinking which followed it."

(1) TO MISS MABANE,* EDINBURGH.

(STEWART'S "LETTERS OF BURNS TO CLARINDA," 1802.)

HERE have I sat, my dear Madam, in the stony attitude of perplexed study for fifteen vexatious minutes, my head askew, bending over the intended card, my fixed eye insensible to the very light of day poured around; my pendulous goose-feather, loaded with ink, hanging over the future letter; all for the important purpose of writing a complimentary card to accompany your trinket.

Compliment is such a miserable Greenland expression, and lies at such a chilly polar distance from the torrid zone of my constitution that I cannot, for the very soul of me, use it to any person for whom I have the twentieth part of the esteem every one must have for you who knows you.

As I leave town in three or four days, I can give myself the pleasure of calling on you only for a minute. Tuesday evening, sometime about seven or after, I shall wait on you for your farewell commands.

The hinge of your box I put into the hands of the proper connoisseur. The broken glass likewise went under review; but deliberative wisdom thought it would too much endanger the whole fabric [to replace it].—I am, dear Madam, with all sincerity of enthusiasm,—Your very obedt. servant, ROBT. BURNS.

Saturday Noon,
NO. 2 ST. JAMES' SQUARE,
NEW TOWN, EDINBURGH. [*1st Decem.* 1787.]

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* This lady became Mrs. Colonel Wright, but there is no tradition of any connecting link between her and Burns, except this short letter.

Burns had at length, early in December 1787 (after having in vain waited for a final settlement with Mr. Creech,) resolved on leaving Edinburgh, when an accident occurred which had the effect of detaining him for at least three months longer. A Miss Nimmo, residing in Allison Square, Potterrow, of whom the poet was an occasional visitor, (in respect she was the intimate friend of his correspondent Miss Chalmers), had a small tea-party in her house about the beginning of December, where he was a principal guest. Another "principal guest" on that occasion was Mrs. M'Lehose, a familiar acquaintance of Miss Nimmo, who after reading Burns's poems and hearing him so greatly spoken of, had earnestly pressed her friend to make them acquainted. The lady "had a presentiment that both should derive pleasure from the society of each other," and the result of the interview was no disappointment. A "return" tea-party was arranged to take place in the house of Mrs. M'Lehose, which was only two hundred paces distant, at the opposite side of the Potterrow. Burns accepted the invitation to be present on the evening fixed—Thursday, 6th December—but the poet preferred a *tête-a-tête* interview; so instead of making appearance then, a letter came as his substitute, pleading that unforeseen necessity frustrated his intention; but that on Saturday evening he would make up for his own disappointment by waiting on her. However, as accident would have it, on the afternoon of Saturday, an unlucky fall from a coach seriously bruised one of his knees, making him a cripple, and thus began the long series of letters known as the "Correspondence with Clarinda." We have resolved to keep that correspondence apart from the poet's other letters, as forming a distinct episode in his history, the effect of which would be marred if interwoven with the general correspondence, which we shall therefore go on with, and introduce the "Clarinda Correspondence" entire, by way of interlude, at its proper place.

(5) TO MISS CHALMERS, HARVIESTON.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

EDINBURGH, *Dec.* 12, 1787.

I AM here under the care of a surgeon, with a bruised limb extended on a cushion; and the tints of my mind vying with the livid horror preceding a

midnight thunder-storm. A drunken coachman was the cause of the first, and incomparably the lightest evil; misfortune, bodily constitution, hell, and myself, have formed a "Quadruple Alliance" to guarantee the other. I got my fall on Saturday (Dec. 8), and am getting slowly better.

I have taken tooth and nail to the Bible, and am got through the five books of Moses, and half way in Joshua. It is really a glorious book.* I sent for my book binder to-day, and ordered him to get me an octavo Bible in sheets, the best paper and print in town; and bind it with all the elegance of his craft.

I would give my best song to my worst enemy, I mean the merit of making it, to have you and Charlotte by me. You are angelic creatures, and would pour oil and wine into my wounded spirit.

I inclose you a proof copy of the "Banks of the Devon," which present with my best wishes to Charlotte. The "Ochil-hills" you shall probably have next week for yourself. None of your fine speeches!

R. B.

TO MR. FRANCIS HOWDEN,

JEWELLER, PARLIAMENT SQUARE.

(CHAMBERS, 1852.)

THE bearer of this will deliver you a small shade to set; which, my dear Sir, if you would highly oblige a poor cripple devil as I am at present, you will finish at furthest against to-morrow evening. It goes a hundred miles into the country; and if it is at me by five o'clock to-morrow evening, I have an opportunity of a private hand to convey it; if not, I don't know how to get it sent. Set it just as you

* His poems composed before this date display an intimate familiarity with these books.

did the others you did for me—"in the neatest and cheapest manner; both to answer as a breast-pin, and with a ring to answer as a locket. Do despatch it; as it is, I believe, the pledge of love, and perhaps the prelude to ma-tri-mo-ny. Everybody knows the auld wife's observation when she saw a poor dog going to be hanged—"God help us! it's the gate we ha'e a' to gang!"

The parties, one of them at least, is a very particular acquaintance of mine—the honest lover. He only needs a little of an advice which my grandmother, rest her soul, often gave me, and I as often neglected—

"Leuk twice or ye loup ance."

Let me conjure you, my friend, by the bended bow of Cupid—by the unloosed cestus of Vestus—by the lighted torch of Hymen—that you will have the locket finished by the time mentioned! And if your worship would have as much Christian charity as call with it yourself, and comfort a poor wretch, not wounded indeed by Cupid's arrow, but bruised by a good, serious, agonising, damned, hard knock on the knee, you will gain the earnest prayers, when he does pray, of, dear Sir, your humble servant, ROBT. BURNS.

ST. JAMES' SQUARE, *No. 2, Attic Storey.*

Chambers remarks that the preceding "business note" shews how apt the mind of Burns was, "even on the most trivial subjects, to scintillate out vivid expressions and droll or fanciful ideas."

On 13th December 1787 Lord President Dundas, of the Court of Session, died somewhat suddenly, and Burns was pressed by Mr. Charles Hay, advocate, (afterwards Lord Newton) one of the members of the Crochallan Club, to compose some elegiac verses on the occasion. Dr. Alexander Wood, the kind surgeon who attended to the poet's bruised limb at that time, warmly seconded that proposal; suggesting that the poetic compliment might lead to some beneficial results, through the powerful political influence of the Dundas family.

The poem was executed, and forwarded by the hands of Dr. Wood to the son of the deceased with the result which the reader will find narrated at page 138 *supra*.

TO CHARLES HAY, ESQ., ADVOCATE.

(CHAMBERS' PEOPLE'S ED., 1840.)

SIR,—The enclosed poem was written in consequence of your suggestion, last time I had the pleasure of seeing you. It cost me an hour or two of next morning's sleep, but did not please me; so it lay by, an ill-digested effort, till the other day that I gave it a critic brush. These kind of subjects are much hackneyed; and, besides, the wailings of the rhyming tribe over the ashes of the great are cursedly suspicious, and out of all character for sincerity. These ideas damped my Muse's fire; however, I have done the best I could, and, at all events, it gives me an opportunity of declaring that I have the honor to be, Sir, your obliged humble servant, R. B.

(6) TO MISS CHALMERS, HARVIESTON.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

EDINBURGH, *Dec.* 19, 1787.

I BEGIN this letter in answer to yours of the 17th current, which is not yet cold since I read it. The atmosphere of my soul is vastly clearer than when I wrote you last. For the first time, yesterday I crossed the room on crutches. It would do your heart good to see my bardship, not on my poetic, but on my oaken stilts; throwing my best leg with an air! and with as much hilarity in my gait and countenance, as a May frog leaping across the newly harrowed ridge, enjoying the fragrance of the refreshed earth after the long expected shower!

I can't say I am altogether at my ease when I see anywhere in my path that meagre, squalid, famine-faced spectre—Poverty; attended as he always is by iron-fisted Oppression, and leering Contempt; but I have sturdily withstood his buffetings many a hard-labored day already, and still my motto is—I DARE! My worst enemy is *moi même*. I lie so miserably open to the inroads and incursions of a mischievous, light-armed, well-mounted banditti, under the banners of Imagination, Whim, Caprice, and Passion; and the heavy-armed veteran regulars of Wisdom, Prudence, and Forethought move so very, very slow, that I am almost in a state of perpetual warfare, and, alas! frequent defeat. There are just two creatures I would envy—a horse in his wild state traversing the forests of Asia, or an oyster on some of the desert shores of Europe. The one has not a wish without enjoyment, the other has neither wish nor fear. R. B.

(1) TO MR. RICHARD BROWN, IRVINE.

(WALKER'S ED., 1811.)

EDINBURGH, *30th Dec.* 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have met with few things in life which have given me more pleasure than Fortune's kindness to you since those days in which we met in the vale of misery; as I can honestly say that I never knew a man who more truly deserved it, or to whom my heart more truly wished it. I have been much indebted since that time to your story and sentiments for steeling my mind against evils, of which I have had a pretty decent share. My Will-o'-wisp fate you know: do you recollect a Sunday we spent together in Eglinton Woods? You told me, on my repeating some verses to you, that you wondered I could resist the temptation of sending verses of such merit to a

magazine. It was from this remark I derived that idea of my own pieces which encouraged me to endeavor at the character of a poet. I am happy to hear that you will be two or three months at home. As soon as a bruised limb will permit me, I shall return to Ayrshire, and we shall meet; "and faith, I hope we'll not sit dumb, nor yet cast out!"

I have much to tell you "of men, their manners, and their ways;" perhaps a little of the other sex. *Apropos*, I beg to be remembered to Mrs. Brown. There, I doubt not, my dear friend, but you have found substantial happiness. I expect to find you something of an altered, but not a different man; the wild, bold, generous young fellow, composed into the steady affectionate husband, and the fond, careful parent. For me, I am just the same will-o'-wisp being I used to be. About the first and fourth quarters of the moon, I generally set in for the trade-wind of wisdom; but about the full and change, I am the luckless victim of mad tornadoes, which blow me into Chaos. Almighty Love still reigns and revels in my bosom; and I am at this moment ready to hang myself for a young Edinburgh widow, who has wit and wisdom more murderously fatal than the assassinating stiletto of the Sicilian bandit, or the poisoned arrow of the savage African. My highland dirk, that used to hang beside my crutches, I have removed into a neighboring closet, the key of which I cannot command, in case of spring-tide paroxysms. You may guess of her wit by the following verses she sent me the other day. My best compliment to my friend, Allan.—Adieu! R. B.

The "Edinburgh widow" referred to in the above letter was, of course, Mrs. M'Lehose, who although not a widow, was a deserted wife. The verses given by Dr. Walker, who first published the letter, are those which appear in the Clarinda correspondence beginning,

"Talk not of Love, it gives me pain."

These stanzas, however, were not composed until after the date of the letter to Brown, so that we must infer they were introduced by Walker at hap-hazard from Johnson's Museum, where they were published in Feb. 1788. The reader will find the verses really forwarded to Brown, at page 141, *supra*.

(?) TO MRS. DUNLOP, OF DUNLOP.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

. . . . . After six weeks' confinement, I am beginning to walk across the room. They have been six horrible weeks; anguish and low spirits made me unfit to read, write, or think.

I have a hundred times wished that one could resign life as an officer resigns his commission, for I would not take in any poor ignorant wretch by selling out. Lately I was a sixpenny private, and, God knows, a miserable soldier enough; now I march to the campaign, a starving cadet—a little more conspicuously wretched.

I am ashamed of all this; for though I do want bravery for the warfare of life, I could wish, like some other soldiers, to have as much fortitude or cunning as to dissemble or conceal my cowardice.

As soon as I can bear the journey, which will be, I suppose, about the middle of next week, I leave Edinburgh; and soon after I shall pay my grateful duty at Dunlop House. R. B.

EDINBURGH, 21*st Jan.*, 1788 [*Monday.*]

(?) To MISS MARGARET CHALMERS.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

[TUESDAY, 22*d Jan.* 1788.]

Now for that wayward, unfortunate thing, *myself.* I have broke measures with Creech, and last week I

wrote him a frosty, keen letter. He replied in terms of chastisement, and promised me upon his honor that I shall have the account on Monday; but this is Tuesday, and yet I have not heard a word from him. God have mercy on me! a poor, damned, incautious, duped, unfortunate fool! The sport, the miserable victim of rebellious pride, hypochondriac imagination, agonising sensibility, and bedlam passion!

"I wish that I were dead, but I'm no like to die!" I had lately "a hairbreadth 'scape in the imminent deadly breach," of love too. Thank my stars, I got off heart-whole, "waur fleyed than hurt."—Interruption.

I have this moment got a hint. . . . I fear I am something like—undone;* but I hope the best. Come stubborn Pride and unshrinking Resolution, accompany me through this, to me, miserable world! You must not desert me. Your friendship I think I can count on, though I should date my letters from a marching Regiment. Early in life, and all my life, I reckoned on a recruiting drum as my forlorn-hope. Seriously though, life presents me with but a melancholy path: but—my limb will soon be sound, and I shall struggle on. R. B.

(3) TO THE EARL OF GLENCAIRN.

(Currie, 1801.)

[Edinr. *Jan.* 1788.]

I know your Lordship will disapprove of my ideas in a request I am going to make to you; but I have weighed, long and seriously weighed, my situation,

* It is not, for certainty, known what was the unexpected, and disheartening intelligence that so seriously affected Burns at this time. Cunningham suggests "a rumor of Creech's insolvency," but Chambers, who holds that Creech's affairs did not then, nor at any time, justify suspicion of financial difficulties, is inclined to think that distressing news from home regarding Jean Armour's predicament raised the present alarm in the poet's mind. His letter to Mrs. Dunlop in August following, seems to support this theory: "The time I was laid up a cripple in Edinburgh, she was literally turned out of doors, and I wrote to a friend to shelter her till my retnrn."

my hopes, and turn of mind, and am fully fixed to my scheme if I can possibly effectuate it. I wish to get into the Excise: I am told that your Lordship's interest will easily procure me the grant from the commissioners; and your Lordship's patronage and goodness, which have already rescued me from obscurity, wretchedness, and exile, embolden me to ask that interest. You have likewise put it in my power to save the little tie of home that sheltered an aged mother, two brothers, and three sisters from destruction. There, my Lord, you have bound me over to the highest gratitude.

My brother's farm is but a wretched lease, but I think he will probably weather out the remaining seven years of it; and after the assistance which I have given and will give him, to keep the family together, I think, by my guess, I shall have rather better than two hundred pounds; and instead of seeking, what is almost impossible at present to find, a farm that I can certainly live by, with so small a stock, I shall lodge this sum in a banking-house, a sacred deposit, excepting only the calls of uncommon distress or necessitous old age. . . . . .

These, my Lord, are my views: I have resolved from the maturest deliberation; and now I am fixed, I shall leave no stone unturned to carry my resolve into execution. Your Lordship's patronage is the strength of my hopes; nor have I yet applied to anybody else. Indeed, my heart sinks within me at the idea of applying to any other of the Great who have honored me with their countenance. I am ill qualified to dog the heels of greatness with the impertinence of solicitation, and tremble nearly as much at the thought of the cold promise as the cold denial; but to your Lordship I have not only the honor, the comfort, but the pleasure of being—Your Lordship's much obliged and deeply indebted humble servant, R. B.

(1) TO ROBERT GRAHAM, ESQ., OF FINTRY.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

[EDINR. *Jan.* 1788.]

SIR,—When I had the honor of being introduced to you at Athole-house, I did not think so soon of asking a favor of you. When Lear, in Shakspeare, asked Old Kent why he wished to be in his service, he answers, "Because you have that in your face which I would fain call master." For some such reason, Sir, do I now solicit your patronage. You know, I dare say, of an application I lately made to your Board to be admitted an officer of Excise. I have, according to form, been examined by a supervisor, and to-day I give in his certificate, with a request for an order for instructions. In this affair, if I succeed, I am afraid I shall but too much need a patronizing friend. Propriety of conduct as a man, and fidelity and attention as an officer, I dare engage for; but with any thing like business, except manual labor, I am totally unacquainted. . . . . .

I had intended to have closed my late appearance on the stage of life, in the character of a country farmer; but after discharging some filial and fraternal claims, I find I could only fight for existence in that miserable manner, which I have lived to see throw a venerable parent into the jaws of a jail; whence death, the poor man's last and often best friend, rescued him.

I know, Sir, that to need your goodness, is to have a claim on it; may I, therefore, beg your patronage to forward me in this affair, till I be appointed to a division; where, by the help of rigid economy, I will try to support that independence so dear to my soul, but which has been too often so distant from my situation.

R. B.

Towards the middle of January the poet's limb was so far healed that he could go up and down stairs without the aid of a staff. He had consulted his kind medical attendant, Dr. Alex. Wood, in regard to his favorite scheme of entering into the Excise business, and that gentleman being on an intimate footing with several of the Commissioners, promised to help his views to the extent of his power. The above letters were accordingly written and delivered to the patrons to whom they are addressed; and patronage hunting occupied the poet's attention for a few days, with results such as might be anticipated. On Sunday 27th January, we have these results communicated to Clarinda, thus:—"I have almost given up the Excise idea. I have been just now to wait on a great person. . . . I have been questioned like a child about my matters, and blamed and schooled for my inscription on Stirling window. Come Clarinda! 'Come, curse me, Jacob; come, defy me, Israel!'"

(8) TO MRS. DUNLOP OF DUNLOP.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

EDINR. *12th Feb.* 1788.

SOME things in your late letters hurt me; not that *you say them*, but that *you mistake me.* Religion, my honored Madam, has not only been all my life my chief dependence, but my dearest enjoyment. I have indeed been the luckless victim of wayward follies; but, alas! I have ever been "more fool than knave." A mathematician without religion is a probable character; an irreligious poet is a monster. . . .

R. B.

(2) TO REV. JOHN SKINNER.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

EDINBURGH, *Feb.* 14*th*, 1788.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—I have been a cripple now near three months, though I am getting vastly better, and have been very much hurried besides, or else I would have wrote you sooner. I must beg your pardon for the epistle you sent me appearing in the

Magazine. I had given a copy or two to some of my intimate friends, but did not know of the printing of it till the publication of the Magazine. However, as it does great honor to us both, you will forgive it.

The second volume of the songs I mentioned to you in my last is published to-day. I send you a copy, which I beg you will accept as a mark of the veneration I have long had, and shall ever have, for your character, and of the claim I make to your continued acquaintance. Your songs appear in the third volume, with your name in the index; as I assure you, Sir, I have heard your "Tullochgorum," particularly among our west country-folks given to many different names, and most commonly to the immortal author of "The Minstrel," who, indeed, never wrote anything superior to "Gie's a sang, Montgomery cried." Your brother * has promised me your verses to the Marquis of Huntly's reel, which certainly deserve a place in the collection. My kind host, Mr. Cruikshank, of the High School here, and said to be one of the best Latins in this age, begs me to make you his grateful acknowledgments for the entertainment he has got in a Latin publication of yours, that I borrowed for him from your acquaintance and much respected friend in this place, the Rev. Dr. Webster.† Mr. Cruikshank maintains that you write the best Latin since Buchanan. I leave Edinburgh to-morrow, but shall return in three weeks. Your song you mentioned in your last, to the tune of "Dumbarton Drums," and the other, which you say was done by a brother in trade of mine, a ploughman, I shall thank you for a copy of each.—I am ever, Reverend Sir, with the most respectful esteem and sincere veneration, yours, R. B.

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* Mr. James Skinner, W.S., half-brother of the author of *Tullochgorum*, and thirty years his junior. He died about 1848.

† An Episcopal clergyman in Edinburgh.

PREFACE TO VOL. II. OF JOHNSON'S MUSICAL MUSEUM.

"The Songs contained in this Volume, both music and poetry, are all of them the work of Scotsmen. Wherever the old words could be recovered, they have been preferred; both as generally suiting better the genius of the tunes, and to preserve the productions of these earlier Sons of the Scottish Muse, some of whose names deserved a better fate than has befallen them—"Buried 'midst the wreck of things which were." Of our more modern Songs, the Editor has inserted the Authors' names, as far as he could ascertain them; and as that was neglected in the first Volume, it is annexed here. If he have made any mistakes in this affair, which he possibly may, he shall be very grateful at being set right.

"Ignorance and Prejudice may perhaps affect to sneer at the simplicity of the poetry or music of some of these pieces; but their having been for ages the favorites of Nature's Judges—the Common People—was to the Editor a sufficient test of their merit."

"EDIN., *March* 1, 1788."

(2) TO MR. RICHARD BROWN, GREENOCK.

(WALKER'S ED., 1811.)

EDIN., 15*th Feb.* 1788.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I received yours with the greatest pleasure. I shall arrive at Glasgow on Monday evening; and beg, if possible, you will meet me on Tuesday. I shall wait on you Tuesday all day. I shall be found at Durie's Black Bull Inn. I am hurried as if hunted by fifty devils, else I should go to Greenock; but if you cannot possibly come, write me, if possible, to Glasgow on Monday; or direct to me at Mossgiel by Mauchline; and name a day and place in Ayrshire, within a fortnight from this date, where I may meet you. I only stay a fortnight in Ayrshire, and return to Edinburgh.—I am ever, my dearest friend, yours, ROBT. BURNS.

(8) TO MISS MARGARET CHALMERS.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

EDIN., *Sunday*, [*Feb.* 17, 1788.]

TO-MORROW, my dear Madam, I leave Edinburgh. I have altered all my plans of future life. A farm that I could live in, I could not find; and indeed, after the necessary support my brother and the rest of the family required, I could not venture on farming in that style suitable to my feelings. You will condemn me for the next step I have taken: I have entered into the Excise. I stay in the west about three weeks, and then return to Edinburgh for six weeks' instructions; afterwards, for I get employ instantly, I go, *où il plait à Dieu—et mon roi.* I have chosen this, my dear Friend, after mature deliberation. The question is not at what door of Fortune's palace shall we enter in, but what doors does she open to us? I was not likely to get anything to do. I wanted *un bût*, which is a dangerous, an unhappy situation. I got this without any hanging on, or mortifying solicitation; it is immediate bread; and though poor in comparison of the last eighteen months of my existence, 'tis luxury in comparison of all my preceding life; besides, the Commissioners are some of them my acquaintances, and all of them my firm friends.

R. B.

(1) TO MRS. ROSE, OF KILRAVOCK.*

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

EDINBURGH, *17th February* 1788.

MADAM,—You are much indebted to some indispensable business I have had on my hands, otherwise,

* Mrs. Rose, a most accomplished amiable woman, was the representative of a very ancient Inverness family; with which, by his mother's side, Henry Mackenzie, author of "The Man of Feeling," was connected. The "dear little angel" referred to was Hugh, who lived to be twentieth laird of Kilravock; "my venerable friend," Mrs. Rose's mother; and the "two fair spirits of the hill," Miss Ross and a Miss Brodie.—*See* page 339, *supra*.

my gratitude threatened such a return for your obliging favor as would have tired your patience.* It but poorly expresses my feelings to say, that I am sensible of your kindness; it may be said of hearts such as yours is, and such, I hope, mine is, much more justly than Addison applies it,—

"Some souls by instinct to each other turn."

There was something in my reception at Kilravock so different from the cold, obsequious, dancing-school bow of politeness, that it almost got into my head that friendship had occupied her ground without the intermediate march of acquaintance. I wish I could transcribe, or rather transfuse into language, the glow of my heart when I read your letter. My ready fancy, with colors more mellow than life itself, painted the beautifully wild scenery of Kilravock — the venerable grandeur of the castle — the spreading woods — the winding river, gladly leaving his unsightly, heathy source, and lingering with apparent delight as he passes the fairy walk at the bottom of the garden;— your late distressful anxieties—your present enjoyments —your dear little angel, the pride of your hopes;— my aged friend, venerable in worth and years, whose loyalty and other virtues will strongly entitle her to the support of the Almighty Spirit here, and His peculiar favor in a happier state of existence. You cannot imagine, Madam, how much such feelings delight me: they are my dearest proofs of my own immortality. Should I never revisit the north, as probably I never will, nor again see your hospitable mansion, were I, some twenty years hence, to see your little

* Dr. Currie printed a letter addressed to Burns by this lady (Mrs. Rose, jun.,) dated 30th Nov. 1787. The poet's allusions throughout the text are a reply to that letter. She had enclosed some Gaelic airs with the native words which were supplied by "one of the fair spirits of the hill of Kildrummie." These, although in Gaelic, are not inscribed in a language "unknown" to you. "The language of love is a universal one, which seems to have escaped the confusion of Babel, and to be understood by all nations."

fellow's name making a proper figure in a newspaper paragraph, my heart would bound with pleasure.

I am assisting a friend in a collection of Scottish songs, set to their proper tunes; every air worth preserving is to be included: among others I have given "Morag," and some few Highland airs which pleased me most, a dress which will be more generally known, though far, far inferior in real merit. As a small mark of my grateful esteem, I beg leave to present you with a copy of the work so far as it is printed: the "Man of Feeling," that first of men, has promised to transmit it by the first opportunity.

I beg to be remembered most respectfully to my venerable friend, and to your little Highland chieftain. When you see the "two fair spirits of the hill," at Kildrummie, tell them that I have done myself the honor of setting myself down as one of their admirers for at least twenty years to come, consequently they must look upon me as an acquaintance for the same period; but as the Apostle Paul says, "this I ask of grace, not of debt."—I have the honor to be, Madam, &c., ROBT. BURNS.

Burns was at length enabled to leave Edinburgh, at this time, on Monday 18th February. At Glasgow he met Mr. Richard Brown, and also William Burns, his youngest brother. In Paisley he spent a day with Mr. Pattison, his correspondent of the preceding May, from which town he proceeded to Dunlop House, where he remained nearly two days. He then took Kilmarnock by the way, tarrying with Mr. Robert Muir and other friends there over Friday, and reached Mossgiel on Saturday the 23rd.

(3) TO MR. RICHARD BROWN, GREENOCK.

(WALKER'S ED., 1811.)

MOSSGIEL, *24th February* 1788.

MY DEAR SIR,—I cannot get the proper direction for my friend in Jamaica, but the following will do:—

To Mr. Jo. Hutchinson, at Jo. Brownrigg's, Esq., care of Mr. Benjamin Henriquez, merchant, Orange Street, Kingston. I arrived here, at my brother's, only yesterday, after fighting my way through Paisley and Kilmarnock, against those old powerful foes of mine, the devil, the world, and the flesh—so terrible in the fields of dissipation. I have met with few incidents in my life which gave me so much pleasure as meeting you in Glasgow. There is a time of life beyond which we cannot form a tie worth the name of friendship. "O youth! enchanting stage, profusely blest."* Life is a fairy scene; almost all that deserves the name of enjoyment or pleasure is only a charming delusion; and in comes repining age in all the gravity of hoary wisdom, and wretchedly chases away the bewitching phantom. When I think of life, I resolve to keep a strict look-out in the course of economy, for the sake of worldly convenience and independence of mind: to cultivate intimacy with a few of the companions of youth, that they may be the friends of age; never to refuse my liquorish humor a handful of the sweetmeats of life, when they come not too dear; and, for Futurity–

"The present moment is our *ain*, own
The *niest* we never saw!" next

How like you my philosophy? Give my best compliments to Mrs. B., and believe me to be,—My dear Sir, yours most truly, ROB^T. BURNS.

On Monday, 25th February, the poet, in company with Mr. John Tennant of Glenconner, "his own and his father's friend," proceeded to Dumfries to inspect Mr. Miller's farms in the neighborhood of Dalswinton; and under his advice, he selected Ellisland. At Cumnock in his homeward route he wrote to Clarinda on Sunday, 2nd March, assuring her that he would be in Edinburgh on the following week.

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* This was, to the last, a favorite quotation of Clarinda.

(2) TO MR. WILLIAM CRUIKSHANK.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

MAUCHLINE, *3d March* 1788.

MY DEAR SIR,—Apologies for not writing are frequently like apologies for not singing—the apology better than the song. I have fought my way severely through the savage hospitality of this country, [the object of all hosts being] to send every guest drunk to bed if they can.

I executed your commission in Glasgow, and I hope the cocoa came safe. 'Twas the same price and the very same kind as your former parcel, for the gentleman recollected your buying there perfectly well.

I should return my thanks for your —— hospitality (I leave a blank for the epithet, as I know none can do it justice) to a poor, wayfaring bard, who was spent and almost overpowered fighting with prosaic wickedness in high places; but I am afraid lest you should burn the letter whenever you come to the passage, so I pass over it in silence. I am just returned from visiting Mr. Miller's farm. The friend whom I told you I would take with me was highly pleased with the farm; and as he is, without exception, the most intelligent farmer in the country, he has staggered me a good deal. I have the two plans of life before me; I shall balance them to the best of my judgment, and fix on the most eligible. I have written Mr. Miller, and shall wait on him when I come to town, which shall be the beginning or middle of next week; I would be in sooner, but my unlucky knee is rather worse, and I fear for some time will scarcely stand the fatigue of my Excise instructions. I only mention these ideas to you; and, indeed, except Mr. Ainslie, whom I intend writing to to-morrow, I will not write at all to Edinburgh till I return to it. I

would send my compliments to Mr. Nicol, but he would be hurt if he knew I wrote to anybody and not to him: so I shall only beg my best, kindest, kindest compliments to my worthy hostess and the sweet little Rose-bud.*

So soon as I am settled in the routine of life, either as an Excise-officer, or as a farmer, I propose myself great pleasure from a regular correspondence with the only man almost I ever saw who joined the most attentive prudence with the warmest generosity.

I am much interested for that best of men, Mr. Wood; I hope he is in better health and spirits than when I saw him last.—I am ever, my dearest friend, —Your obliged, humble servant,

ROBT. BURNS.

(5) TO MR. ROBERT AINSLIE,

AT MR. SAML. MITCHELSON'S, W.S., CARRUBBER'S CLOSE, EDINBURGH.

(*Partially published by* CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

MAUCHLINE, 3*d March* 1788.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am just returned from Mr. Miller's farm. My old friend whom I took with me was highly pleased with the bargain, and advised me to accept of it. He is the most intelligent, sensible farmer in this county, and his advice has staggered me a good deal. I have the two plans before me. I shall endeavor to balance them to the best of my judgment, and fix on the most eligible. On the whole, I find Mr. Miller in the same favorable disposition as when I saw him last; I shall in all probability turn farmer.

* This is a reference to the song—"A rosebud, by my early walk," of which his correspondent's youthful daughter was the heroine. It had been just published in the *Museum*.

I have been through sore tribulation, and under much buffeting of the Wicked One, since I came to this country. JEAN I found banished, like a martyr —forlorn, destitute, and friendless; all for the good old cause: I have reconciled her to her fate: I have reconciled her to her mother: I have taken her a room: I have taken her to my arms: I have given her a mahogany bed: I have given her a guinea; and I have embraced her till she rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. But—as I always am on every occasion—I have been prudent and cautious to an astounding degree; I swore her, privately and solemnly, never to attempt any claim on me as a husband, even though any body should persuade her she had such a claim, which she had not, neither during my life, nor after my death. She did all this like a good girl, and . . . . . O! what a peacemaker is &c., &c. . . . .

I shall be in Edinburgh the middle of next week. My farming ideas I shall keep private till I see. I got a letter from Clarinda yesterday, and she tells me she has got no letter of mine but one. Tell her that I wrote to her from Glasgow, from Kilmarnock, from Mauchline, and yesterday from Cumnock as I returned from Dumfries. Indeed, she is the only person in Edinburgh I have written to till this day. How are your soul and body putting up?—a little like man and wife, I suppose—Your faithful friend,

ROBT. BURNS.

The above letter may cause some surprise to the reader who has hitherto seen no more of it than Cunningham ventured to publish. Mr. Ainslie, to whom it is addressed, lived a few years after placing it in that biographer's hands to be used as discretion might dictate. Ainslie, as we have already seen, became a very pious man after sowing his wild oats: and it is almost a pity he did not evince the sincerity of his new professions by destroying this letter after transcribing its

innocent paragraphs. Unfortunately however, the holograph was allowed to get into the market, suffered to be privately printed and widely circulated, and it would be weak affectation now-a-days for any editor of Burns to ignore its existence. Chambers did not scruple to publish that portion of it which is most damaging to the poet's reputation, giving countenance to the idea that he never really respected Mrs. Burns, whom he has in more than one of his letters charged with "vulgarity of soul, and mercenary fawning." "I feel, for my part," says Chambers, "that this is one of the points of the poet's story in which he appears to the least advantage, and I cannot but rejoice on his account that he finally, and in no long time, adopted better views regarding Jean."

Before leaving Edinburgh on 18th Feb., the poet had communicated to Clarinda the fact that his Ayrshire mistress was again about to publish proofs of her intimacy with him. He had to confess to that object of his temporary worship that in the previous June, on his eclatant return from the city, "he flew," as John Wilson waggishly expresses it, "somewhat too fervently to

'Love's willing fetters, the *arms* of his Jean.'"

On learning the fact that in mid-winter the poor girl had been ejected from her father's house, when her second transgression in that forbidden direction became manifest, Burns procured a temporary shelter for her under the roof of his kind friend Wm. Muir, the miller at Tarbolton. He had now (February 1788) established Jean in a lodging in Mauchline, and succeeded in obtaining the benefit of her mother's attendance in her delicate condition. His first care on reaching Mauchline on the morning of Saturday, 23rd Feb., was to visit the poor sufferer in that secret place of retirement; and his first leisure moments after arriving at Mossgiel were devoted to writing a letter to Clarinda describing his impressions resulting from the interview. That letter (which Chambers tells his readers "has not been preserved") we shall give in its proper connexion in "The Clarinda Episode." Jean's confinement occurred about 13th March, a few days after the poet's return to Edinburgh, to execute his lease of Ellisland, and to obtain an order for his Excise instructions. The result was a safe delivery of twin girls, who lived only a few days. The birth is not recorded in the parish books: but an entry in the poet's family register records the fact under a date, "3rd March," which this and the following letter prove to be an impossible one. Chambers does not conceal his surprise

that "even under the temptation of a fondness which had risen to extravagant altitudes, two persons so generous and upright in all the relations of life as Burns and Mrs. M'Lehose, should have been able to reconcile themselves to the sacrifice of this poor village girl."

(4) TO MR. RICHARD BROWN.

(WALKER'S ED., 1811.)

MAUCHLINE, *7th March* 1788.

I HAVE been out of the country, my dear Friend, and have not had an opportunity of writing till now, when I am afraid you will be gone out of the country too. I have been looking at farms, and, after all, perhaps I may settle in the character of a farmer. I have got so vicious a bent to idleness, and have ever been so little a man of business, that it will take no ordinary effort to bring my mind properly into the routine: but you will say a "great effort is worthy of you." I say so myself, and butter up my vanity with all the stimulating compliments I can think of. Men of grave, geometrical minds, the sons of "which was to be demonstrated," may cry up reason as much as they please; but I have always found an honest passion, or native instinct, the truest auxiliary in the warfare of this world. Reason almost always comes to me like an unlucky wife to a poor devil of a husband—just in sufficient time to add her reproaches to his other grievances.

I found Jean with her cargo very well laid in, but unfortunately moored almost at the mercy of wind and tide. I have towed her into a convenient harbor, where she may lie snug till she unload, and have taken the command myself, not ostensibly, but for a time in secret. I am gratified with your kind inquiries after her; as, after all, I may say with Othello—

> "———— Excellent wretch,
> Perdition catch my soul, but I do love thee!'"

I go for Edinburgh on Monday.—Yours,

ROBT. BURNS.

(9) TO MRS. DUNLOP OF DUNLOP.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

MOSSGIEL, *7th March*, 1788.

MADAM,—The last paragraph in yours of the 30th February affected me most,* so I shall begin my answer where you ended your letter. That I am often a sinner with any little wit I have, I do confess; but I have taxed my recollection to no purpose, to find out when it was employed against you. I hate an ungenerous sarcasm, a great deal worse than I do the devil; at least as Milton describes him; and though I may be rascally enough to be sometimes guilty of it myself, I cannot endure it in others. You, my honored friend, who cannot appear in any light, but you are sure of being respectable—you can afford to pass by an occasion to display your wit, because you may depend for fame on your sense; or if you choose to be silent, you know you can rely on the gratitude of many and the esteem of all; but God help us who are wits or witlings by profession, if we stand not for fame there, we sink unsupported!

I am highly flattered by the news you tell me of Coila,† I may say to the fair painter who does me so much honor, as Dr. Beattie says to Ross the poet, of his muse Scota, from which, by the bye, I took the idea of Coila: 'Tis a poem of Beattie's in the Scots dialect, which perhaps you have never seen.

> "Ye shak your head, but o' my fegs,
> Ye've set old Scota on her legs:
> Lang had she lien wi' buffs and flegs,
> Bombaz'd and dizzie,
> Her fiddle wanted strings and pegs,
> Waes me, poor hizzie!"

R. B.

* Mrs. Dunlop had addressed a letter to Burns at that date intimating that she had been informed the latter had ridiculed her.—*Currie.*

† A lady (daughter of Mrs. Dunlop) was making a picture from the description of Coila in the Vision.—*Currie.*

(7) TO MR ROBERT MUIR, KILMARNOCK.

(STEWART, 1801.)

MOSSGIEL, *7th March* 1788.

I HAVE partly changed my ideas, my dear friend, since I saw you. I took old Glenconner with me to Mr. Miller's farm, and he was so pleased with it, that I have wrote an offer to Mr. Miller, which, if he accepts, I shall sit down a plain farmer—the happiest of lives when a man can live by it. In this case I shall not stay in Edinburgh above a week. I set out on Monday, and would have come by Kilmarnock, but there are several small sums owing me for my first edition about Galston and Newmills, and I shall set off so early as to dispatch my business and reach Glasgow by night. When I return, I shall devote a forenoon or two to make some kind of acknowledgment for all the kindness I owe your friendship. Now that I hope to settle with some credit and comfort at home, there was not any friendship or friendly correspondence that promised me more pleasure than yours; I hope I will not be disappointed. I trust the spring will renew your shattered frame, and make your friends happy.* You and I have often agreed that life is no great blessing on the whole. The close of life, indeed, to a reasoning eye, is

> "Dark as was chaos, ere the infant sun
> Was roll'd together, or had try'd his beams
> Athwart the gloom profound."

But an honest man has nothing to fear. If we lie down in the grave, the whole man a piece of broke machinery, to moulder with the clods of the valley, be it so; at least there is an end of pain, care, woes,

* April 22, 1788.—Died at Kilmarnock, Mr. Robert Muir of Loanfoot.—*Scots Mag.*

and wants: if that part of us called Mind does survive the apparent destruction of the man—away with the old-wife prejudices and tales! Every age and every nation has had a different set of stories; and as the many are always weak, of consequence, they have often, perhaps always, been deceived: a man conscious of having acted an honest part among his fellow-creatures—even granting that he may have been the sport at times of passions and instincts—he goes to a great unknown Being, who could have no other end in giving him existence but to make him happy; who gave him those passions and instincts, and well knows their force.

These, my worthy friend, are my ideas; and I know they are not far different from yours. It becomes a man of sense to think for himself; particularly in a case where all men are equally in the dark.

Those copies of mine you have on hand: please send ten of them to Mr. John Ballantine, of the Bank in Ayr; for the remainder, I'll write you about them from Glasgow.

Adieu, my dear Sir! God send us a cheerful meeting.

ROBT. BURNS.

(4) TO MR. WILLIAM NICOL, EDINBURGH (?)*

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

MAUCHLINE, *7th March* 1788.

MY DEAR SIR,—My life, since I saw you last, has been one continued hurry; that savage hospitality which knocks a man down with strong liquors is the devil. I have a sore warfare in this world—the devil,

* The address on back of this letter has been torn off, and there is some doubt as to the individual correspondent to whom it was written. Cunningham assigned it to Robert Ainslie; but on 3d of same month, as we have seen, Burns addressed a letter to that gentleman, communicating much the same information as is here conveyed. The recipient may have been either Nicol, Dunbar, Cleghorn, or Alexander Cunningham. *See* letter to Cruikshank, 3d March, 1788.

the world, and the flesh are three formidable foes. The first, I generally try to fly from; the second, alas! generally flies from me; but the third is my plague—worse than the ten plagues of Egypt.

I have been looking over several farms in this country; one in particular, in Nithsdale, pleased me so well, that if my offer to the proprietor is accepted, I shall commence farmer at Whitsunday. If farming do not appear eligible, I shall have recourse to my other shift; but this to a friend.

I set out for Edin^r., on Monday morning; how long I stay there is uncertain, but you will know so soon as I can inform you myself. However, I determine poesy must be laid aside for some time; my mind has been vitiated by idleness, and it will take a good deal of effort to habituate it to the routine of business.—I am ever, my Dear Sir, Yours sincerely,

ROB^T. BURNS.

The poet seems to have left Ayrshire on 10th March, according to the intention expressed above. It is not known if he tarried by the way in the neighborhood of Biggar; but it is certain that he signed the lease of Ellisland on 13th March, and forthwith set about the completion of his arrangements for entering on Excise work. Besides settling accounts with Mr. Creech, a good deal of intercourse and correspondence with Clarinda occupied the remaining portion of his ten days' stay in the city on that occasion.

(9) MISS MARGARET CHALMERS, HARVIESTON.

(CROMEK 180S.)

EDINBURGH, 14*th March* 1788.

I KNOW, my ever dear friend, that you will be pleased with the news when I tell you, I have at last taken a lease of a farm. Yesternight I completed a bargain with Mr. Miller, of Dalswinton, for the farm of Ellisland, on the banks of the Nith, between five

and six miles above Dumfries. I begin at Whitsunday to build a house, drive lime, &c., and heaven be my help! for it will take a strong effort to bring my mind into the routine of business. I have discharged all the army of my former pursuits, fancies and pleasures; a motley host! and have literally and strictly retained only the ideas of a few friends, which I have incorporated into a life-guard. I trust in Dr. Johnson's observation, "Where much is attempted, something is done." Firmness both in sufferance and exertion, is a character I would wish to be thought to possess; and have always despised the whining yelp of complaint, and the cowardly, feeble resolve. . . . .

Poor Miss K.* is ailing a good deal this winter, and begged me to remember her to you the first time I wrote to you. Surely woman, amiable woman, is often made in vain! Too delicately formed for the rougher pursuits of ambition; too noble for the dirt of avarice, and even too gentle for the rage of pleasure: formed indeed for and highly susceptible of enjoyment and rapture; but that enjoyment, alas! almost wholly at the mercy of the caprice, malevolence, stupidity, or wickedness of an animal at all times comparatively unfeeling, and often brutal. R. B.

After a farewell interview with Clarinda on the night of Saturday 22nd March, which may be regarded as the close of that eccentric interlude in the drama of his life, Burns left Edinburgh on Monday 24th March, proceeding to Dumfriesshire by way of Glasgow, where he tarried two days, waiting (as we suppose) the arrival of his mare, Jenny Geddes. The object of his journey was to complete some arrangements concerning his future farm; and so rapid were his movements, that he was back to Mauchline within a week from the day he left Edinburgh. His new landlord, Mr. Patrick Miller (brother of the Lord Justice Clerk) had purchased the estate of Dalswinton in 1785. Besides the grounds in connexion

* Miss Kennedy was a sister of Mrs. Gavin Hamilton, and survived Burns nearly forty years. She was considerably upwards of ninety when she died.

with the mansion house, it embraced several farms; three of which were respectively named Bankhead, Foregirth, and Ellisland. Burns had his choice of these; but, as we have seen, he was advised to take Ellisland, on the opposite side of the Nith from Dalswinton. Allan Cunningham has recorded his opinion, that if the poet had selected Foregirth, the speculation might have proved a profitable one; as the tenant who afterwards possessed it became wealthy by his farming of it. Mr. Miller himself, however gave no very flattering account of the soil which composed his estate. In a letter, dated 24th Sep. 1810, which was published in a "General View of the Agriculture of Dumfriesshire," he thus wrote:—"When I purchased the estate, I had not seen it; and when I went to view my purchase, I found it in the most miserable state of exhaustion, and all the tenants in poverty. I was so much disgusted for eight or ten days, that I then never meant to return to that county." *

The poet's lease of Ellisland extended to seventy-six years, at an annual rent of £50 for the first three years, and £70 per annum during the remainder; at same time a sum of £300 was stipulated to be granted by the landlord to build a new farm-steading, and to enclose the fields. Four harvests, however, were all that Burns was fated to reap from that soil. From the beginning he had his misgivings—"I daresay Mr. Miller means to favor me; yet it may turn out an advantageous bargain that may ruin me." And even when by old Glenconner's advice he selected Ellisland, he informed Ainslie that "the advice had staggered him a good deal." It was this feeling of insecurity which made him cling so eagerly to the notion of being an exciseman.

The letter of instruction by the Board of Excise to the officer who trained Burns for his forthcoming duties was dated 31st March 1788, and the poet steadily engaged in his course of drill at Tarbolton or its neighborhood, so as to enable him to remove to Ellisland early in June.

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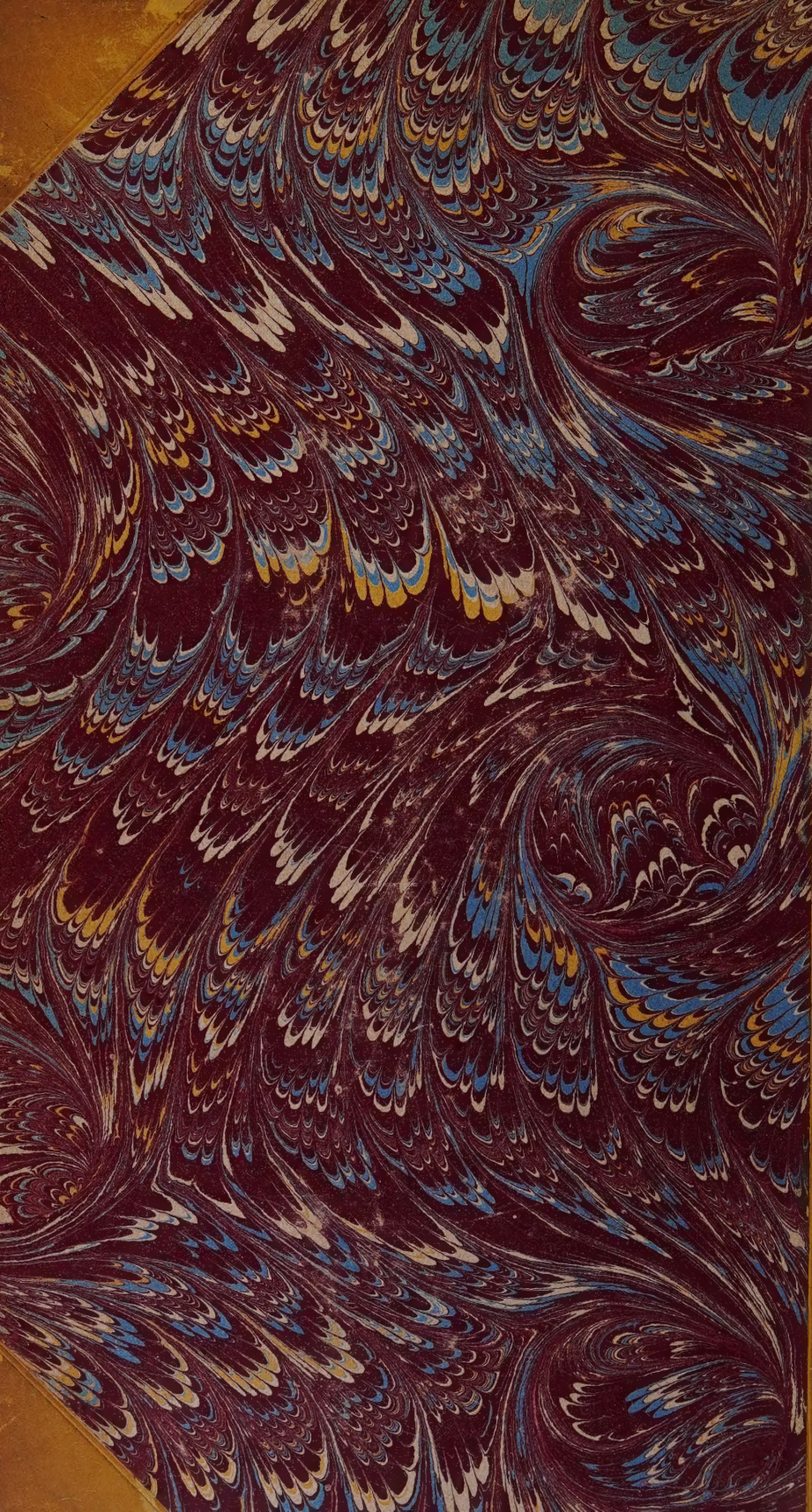
*Mr. Miller, son of Captain Patrick Miller, ruined himself in improving his estate of Dalswinton. Whatever may have been the condition of Bankhead and Foregirth when Burns first saw them, they became afterwards two of the finest and most productive farms in Nithsdale. Ellisland was naturally poorer than either of the other two.—J. H.

END OF VOLUME II.